



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

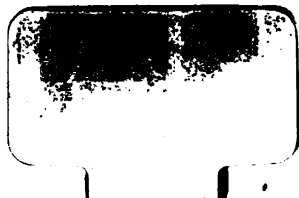
About Google Book Search

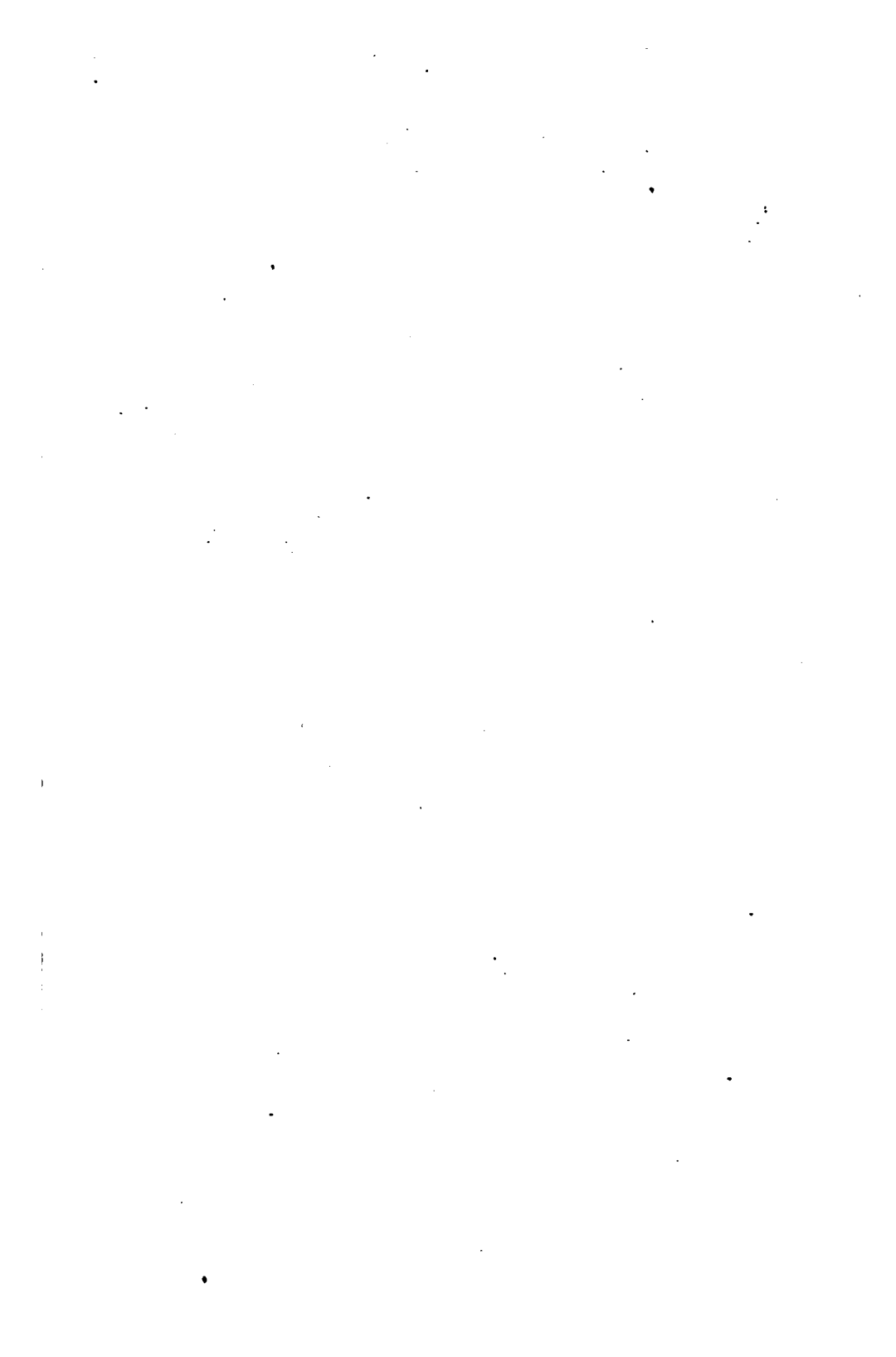
Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

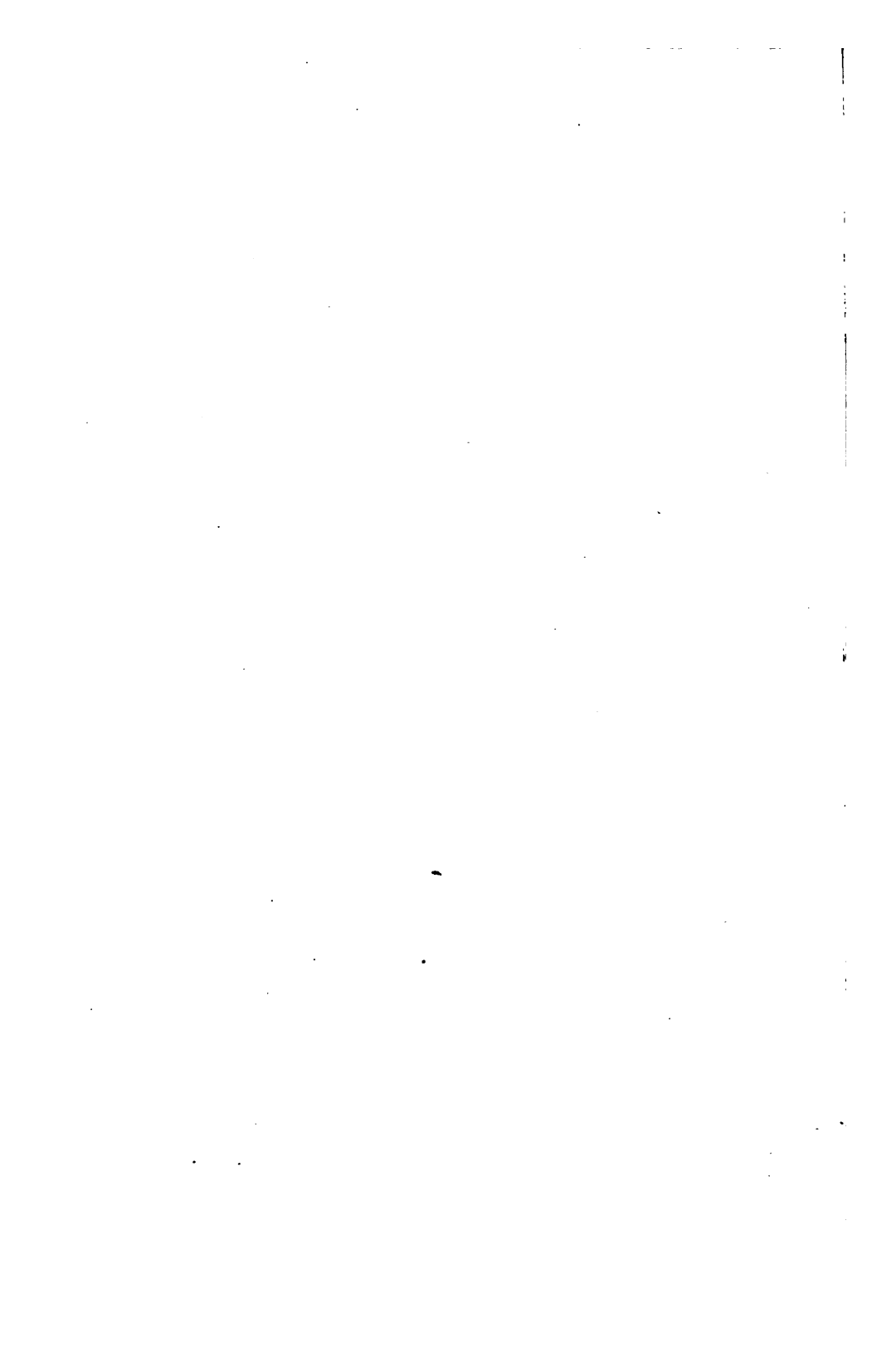




600107770S

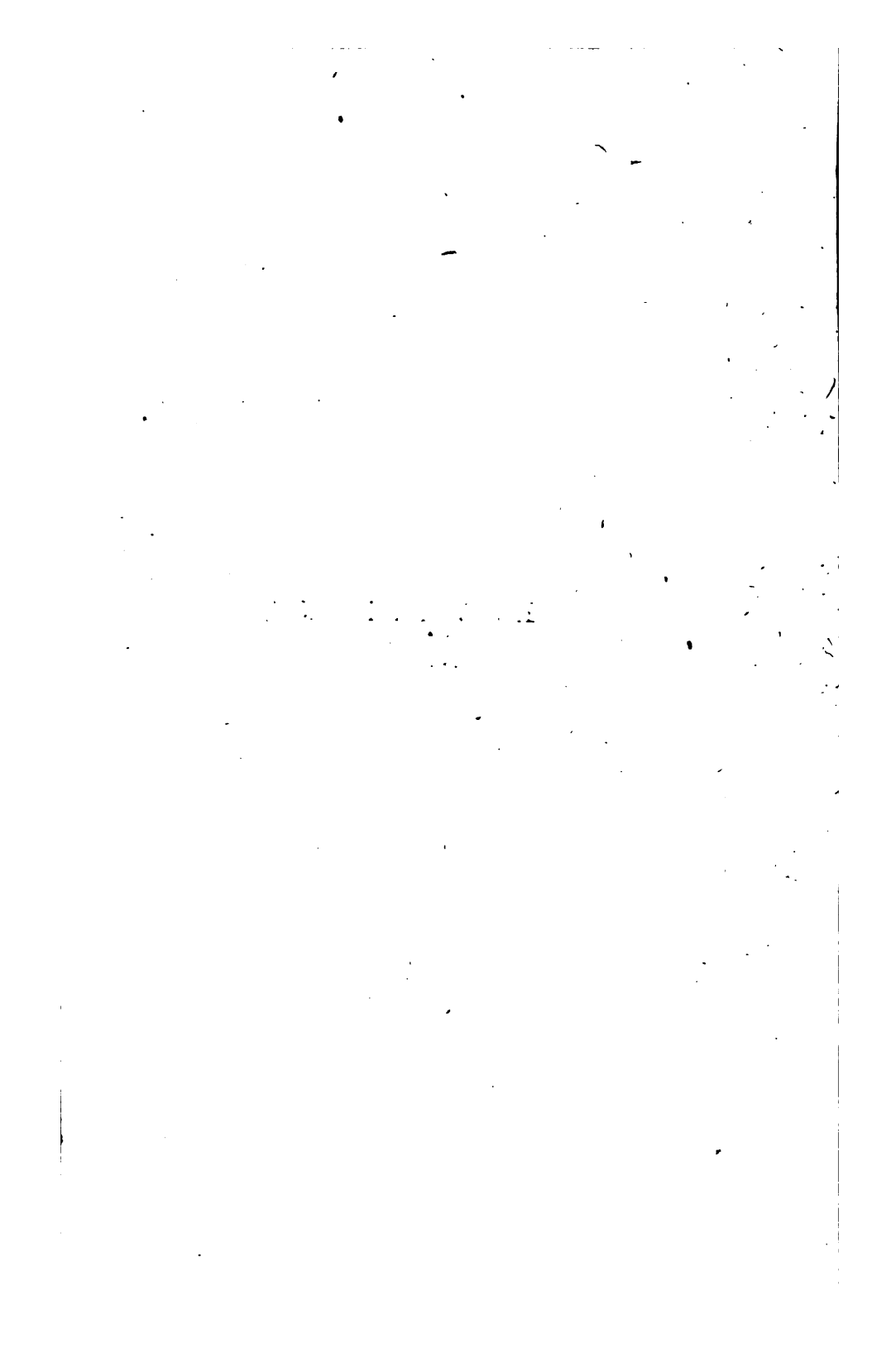






OBSERVATIONS,

ETC.



OBSERVATIONS

ON

A MEMORIAL TO HIS MAJESTY,

AND

PETITION TO BOTH HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT,

FROM

CERTAIN OF THE CLERGY OF THE CHURCH OF IRELAND.

BY

A CHURCHMAN.

DUBLIN.

MILLIKEN AND SON, GRAFTON-STREET,

BOOKSELLERS TO THE UNIVERSITY.

FELLOWES, LUDGATE-STREET, LONDON.

1836.

19.

~~200 . v . 108 .~~
110 . i . 490 .



Dublin : Printed by JOHN S. FOLDS, 5, Bachelor's Walk.

P R E F A C E.

SOME of the documents that have been written in consequence of the Memorial on which the following Observations are made, I have printed in the Appendix, without making any particular reference to them in the body of the Observations. These are the remarks of Archdeacon Stopford, and the anonymous answer, which have been lying with the Memorial and Petition on Mr. Milliken's table. Also, the general Protest of the Clergy, and the Petition of the Archdiocese of Tuam. Mr. Daly's letter in the Dublin Record, and the letter signed R. D. in the Christian Examiner, are extremely valuable, not only on account of their exposure of the financial part of the scheme, but also because they throw such additional light on the mode in which the Signatures to this Memorial were procured, and the consequent degree of value which

should be attached to their names in such a connexion. At the same time, it is with great regret that I have learned, that Mr. Daly's opinion of other parts of this project are so very different from what I should have hoped they would have been.

The Rev. Mr. Free's letter, which has appeared in the Dublin Evening Post, I have not thought it necessary to print. If any of the Memorialists have indeed affixed their names, unsolicited, and with perfect knowledge of the contents of the document, their conduct is deprived of the only circumstances of extenuation hitherto alleged in their favour.

The general Protest has been already signed by more than five hundred of the Clergy: including fifteen Deans, twenty-six Archdeacons, fifty-five Dignitaries and Prebendaries, about three hundred Incumbents of Benefices, and more than one hundred Curates.

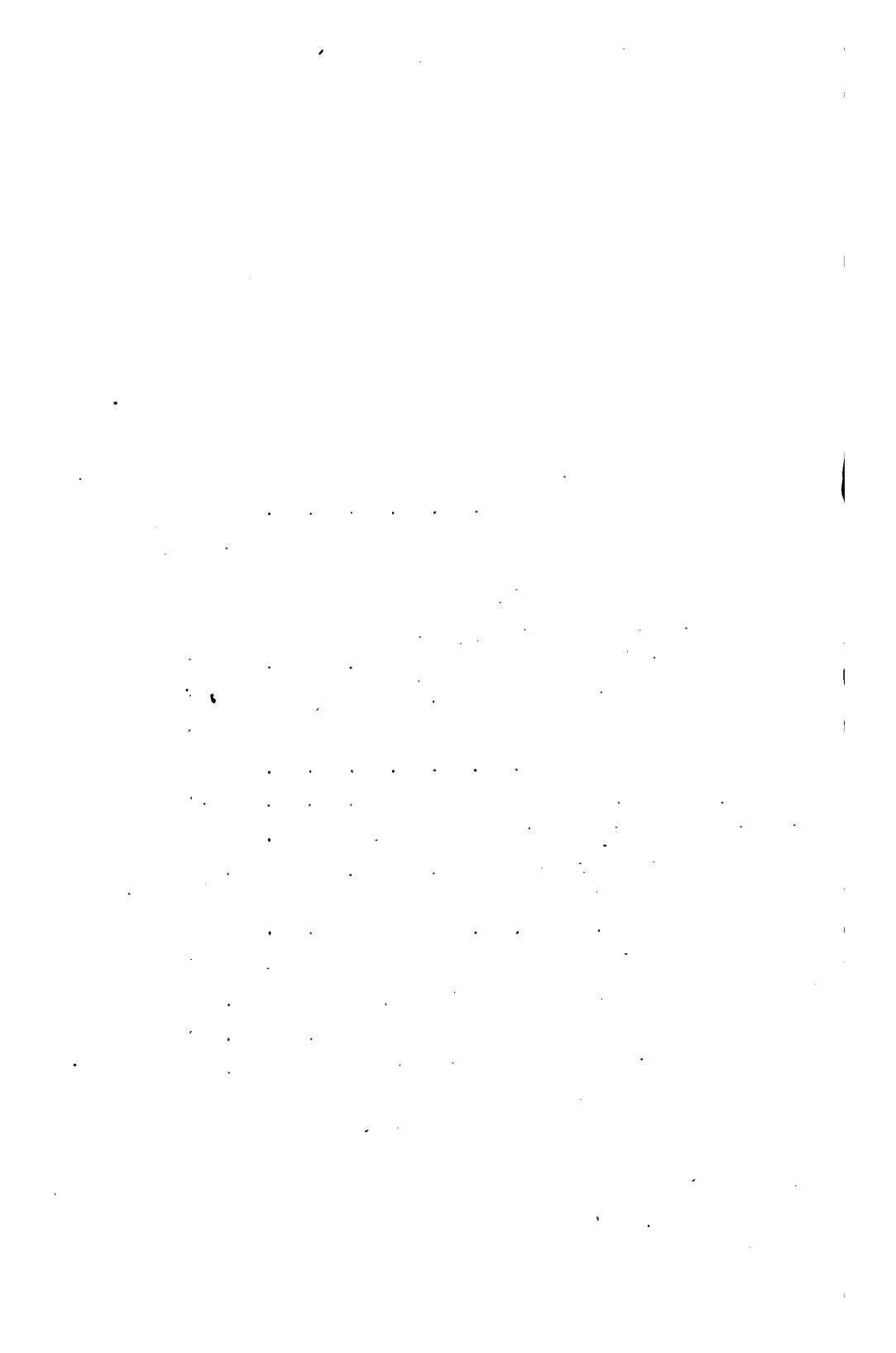
Dublin, February 15th, 1836.

CONTENTS.

Memorial to his Majesty	Page ix
Observations on this Memorial, &c.	1

APPENDIX.

Dr. Dickinson's Letters, which appeared in the Dublin Evening Post—	
No. 1, dated January 20, 1836,	37
No. 2, dated January 26,	40
Archdeacon Stopford's Observations on the Memorial, dated January 29,	42
The Anonymous Reply,	43
Dr. Dickinson's third Letter, dated January 30,	44
Letter in the Christian Examiner for February, signed R. D.	47
Mr. Daly's Letter of January 30,	51
The Bishops' Petition to the House of Lords, presented August 20, 1835,	53
Dr. Elrington's Letter in the Evening Post, dated February 1,	57
Petition to the House of Lords from the Archdiocese of Tuam,	58
General Protest of the Clergy against the Memorial,	59
Dr. Dickinson's Letter in the Evening Post of February 13,	61



MEMORIAL TO HIS MAJESTY.

PREFATORY OBSERVATIONS.

THE unsettled and insecure state of the Church Revenues, and, consequently, of the Church Establishment itself, seems to call for the immediate and strenuous exertions of its friends, to procure, if possible, an immediate and final settlement of the questions that have so long been matter of debate, on the best terms that can, with any reasonable expectation of success, be proposed.

In some places, indeed, Composition is said to be *at present* paid. But besides, that it would be ungenerous for Incumbents thus circumstanced to neglect the rest, it should be remembered that there is no *permanent* security for any. It is in the power of any Member of Parliament, *at any time*, to revive the discussion.

Hitherto the Clergy have confined themselves to petitions *against* such measures as they disliked. It seems better that they should petition *for* a measure which they could approve; and that such a petition should be sent in, before any members have *pledged* themselves by the introduction of a Bill. No time should therefore be lost.

There should be a Memorial to the King, and Petitions to both Houses of Parliament. The Memorial to the King is necessary in the first place, as his Majesty is intreated to relinquish his own patronage of parishes in Ireland.

The formation of an Ecclesiastical Board for collecting the Revenues of Incumbents, should have the first and most prominent place in the Petition, because this measure is necessary to avert *imminent present* danger.

There are many advantages of such a measure; but it will be sufficient to specify two:

1st—Such a Board would be more efficient in collecting the incomes, than each individual Incumbent could be for

himself. The partial success of the Lay-Association, which is an imperfect approach to a legal Board, demonstrates this.

2nd.—Such a Board constituted into a permanent corporation would be more efficient than our present system of *corporations-sole*, in preserving and recovering property. It is better for Trinity College, for instance, to have one permanent corporation, than that each fellow and scholar should be compelled as a corporation sole, to look after his portion of the property.

But a second measure seems called for, to give anything like a *permanent security*; namely, that the Ecclesiastical Board should have a legal power, under the sanction of the Bishops of re-distribution. The principle of re-distribution was recognized in the petition of Irish Bishops last session, as increasing utility, and removing odium.

But wholly and finally to remove *all future danger* (as far as *any* human means can,) it is advisable, (though the rest would still be advantageous even without this,) to have the Tithes purchased by Government, and the purchase-money laid out in some more convenient kind of property, by the Board. And such an arrangement seems the only way, (as it would leave the CHURCH REVENUE UNIMPAIRED, and at the same time would give the nation a surplus of from £200,000 to £300,000 per annum,) to reconcile all those of opposite parties, who are not bent on the overthrow of the Establishment. Some have, in fact, acknowledged, that they do object strongly to the plan, on the very ground that that alone can secure the Establishment. And some may, perhaps, object to it from the very circumstance, that the surplus alluded to will not be taken from the revenues of the Church, whose friends will find in that an additional recommendation.

It is better, in the first instance, to omit all details, as there will be ample opportunity for discussing these, supposing his Majesty and the Houses of Parliament to adopt the principle of the measure.

The annexed Memorial to the King, and similar Petitions, (*mutatis mutandis*,) to both Houses of Parliament, will lie at Messrs. MILLIKEN'S, Grafton Street, for signatures, which may be affixed there by the Clergy, or transmitted :—

MEMORIAL TO THE KING.

WE, the undersigned Clergy of the Established Church, beg leave to approach your Majesty, with every feeling of loyalty and respect, and humbly, but earnestly to solicit that your Majesty will be graciously pleased to take into your early consideration, the prayer of the petition which we now present.

Hitherto that part of the United Church which is in Ireland, has not only suffered much inconvenience, but has even been exposed to much reproach, from not having a power within itself, of re-constituting from time to time, according to circumstances, the districts committed to the charge of the several incumbents, or of apportioning income with any reference to the duties assigned to each. Much insecurity of income has also resulted, and much odium has been incurred, besides minor difficulties and inconveniences, from the incumbents and parishioners being thrown into collision, in consequence of pecuniary payments to each individual clergyman, by his immediate neighbours; a circumstance which has proved a never-ceasing source of mutual dissatisfaction and agitation.

So clearly, indeed, was this evil discerned by a Committee of your Majesty's House of Commons, in the year

1832, that they recommended, in their printed Report, a provision for remedying it, similar in principle to what we now venture to suggest. A measure still more fully in accordance with these suggestions, was proposed last session, in the House of Commons, by the Hon. Mr. Bingham Baring, moved in the form of clauses to be introduced into the Tithe-Bill, then before the House; and his amendment met with approbation of its principle, even on the part of many who considered its adoption at that stage of the proceedings unadvisable.

We therefore humbly pray, that our episcopal rulers be allowed to nominate Ecclesiastical Commissioners, who shall be constituted into a body corporate—empowered, 1st, to collect the revenues of the incumbents for them; 2d, under the sanction, and in each case with the approval of the Bishops, to alter and correct parish divisions, and also to assign to each clergyman hereafter (preserving vested interests) such income out of the general fund as may, in their judgment, be proportioned to the amount of duty, and the weight of responsibility allotted to each.

In order to carry this measure into effect, it is evident lay-presentations should be entirely abolished, which might be accomplished by your Majesty's graciously consenting to relinquish those few livings in Ireland which are in your Majesty's patronage—arrangements at the same time being made for the purchase of advowsons in lay hands.

In addition we humbly solicit your Majesty to take into your gracious consideration whether a further advantage might not be conferred on the nation at large by the following arrangement, namely, That Government should purchase the whole Tithes of Ireland, substituting for

them a land-tax, whose proceeds might be applied to those several local expenses in Ireland which are now defrayed out of the revenues of the united empire :—such as grants to public institutions, &c. We would humbly suggest that Government possess facilities for effecting this purchase, on such terms as would produce (even after making provision for the purchase of advowsons) a very considerable surplus to the nation. While on the other hand the purchase money paid over to the above-mentioned Ecclesiastical Commissioners, would, if employed by them in the purchase, from time to time, of land or rent-charges, produce a revenue nearly equal to the aggregate amount of the present income of incumbents. Thus, while the Church would be improved in its efficiency, and relieved from danger, misrepresentations, and odium, the nation at large would not only effect a considerable pecuniary saving, but would secure the far more important advantage of putting an end to a source of perpetual jealousy, discord, and turbulence.

We, therefore, humbly pray your Majesty graciously to take these circumstances into your early consideration, and to adopt such measures for effecting the proposed objects, as in your Majesty's wisdom may seem best.

And your petitioners, &c.

1. The first part of the report is a general introduction to the subject of the study. It discusses the importance of the study and the objectives of the research. It also provides a brief overview of the methodology used in the study.

2. The second part of the report is a detailed description of the study area. It includes information about the location of the study area, the population of the study area, and the characteristics of the study area. It also discusses the data sources used in the study.

3. The third part of the report is a detailed description of the study results. It includes information about the findings of the study, the conclusions drawn from the findings, and the implications of the findings. It also discusses the limitations of the study and the need for further research.

4. The fourth part of the report is a conclusion and recommendations section. It summarizes the main findings of the study and provides recommendations for future research and policy. It also discusses the significance of the study and the contribution it has made to the field.

OBSERVATIONS,

&c.

THIS document sets out with stating, as ground for Memorial and Petition, that the Revenue of the Church of Ireland is in an insecure and unsettled state. This is more fully explained in the Memorial to his Majesty, where this insecurity is further attributed to the collision resulting in consequence of pecuniary payments to each individual clergyman, by his immediate neighbours.

This I take to be no other than the vulgar worn-out argument against tithes in their own nature, which has been equally convenient to pamphleteers and speech-makers of various sorts, to the acknowledged enemies of the Church, and to those, whom this document rather sarcastically calls its friends. I confess, that I have never yet heard this argument adduced, without horror and amazement. I do not wish to use hard names. But I should cease to consider myself an honest man, if I did not declare my conviction, that it contains neither more nor less than downright blasphemy. Who is the writer of this document, I have no means of discovering. I trust, however, that I may take it for granted, that he does not reject the truth of the

Scripture history, or the inspiration of its authors. This is all I shall require ; and I hope I may so far presume, without giving offence. For, although the document professes to emanate from the Clergy, and is signed only by Clergymen, who have not, I presume, obtained their orders or preferments, in an irregular or fraudulent manner, yet I know, there may be times and places, in which an appeal to the articles of the Church is tantamount to persecution—and no doubt most vexatious it must be to those who choose to indulge a habit of rejecting and vilifying these articles, to be reminded of the solemn and very special occasions, on which they have subscribed their names to them, and declared their unfeigned assent and consent to every one of them, in their literal and grammatical sense. It is very convenient to such persons, to have a short memory ; it would be still more so, if the rest of mankind were equally oblivious. I shall take for granted, therefore, that the authors, abettors, and signers of this document, really do not reject the truth or inspiration of the sacred writers, although they are Clergymen, and have subscribed the thirty-nine articles. Now, supposing this, merely for the sake of argument, there are two or three facts recorded in Scripture, which seem to affect the subject, in a way that these gentlemen do not appear to have recollected.

1. It cannot be denied that the sacred writers represent tithes to have been appointed as the mode of maintaining the ministers of religion, by Moses, (if not earlier,) at the express command of the Almighty.

2. It is equally certain, that tithes did produce collision between the priesthood and the people, under the Old Testament, and that those of the Jews, who were recovered from idolatry, or, as we should say, the protestant landholders of Judea, were so unwilling to pay their

tithes, that the Almighty sent the Prophet Malachi to rebuke them, and to promise them considerable blessings if they would pay them better in future.

3. Though this collision must have been foreseen by God, in the first institution of tithes, and although the certainty and ill consequences of it were thus felt and experienced, yet it was not, in the least degree, guarded against or avoided by our Saviour. On the contrary, the only regulations, which he and his Apostles have made for the support of the Clergy, place them in precisely the same predicament as the Jewish Priesthood. They are to live, by the altar, at which they serve—to eat and drink at the cost of those to whom they preach—and to reap carnal things, or in other words, a decent and sufficient income, from the very individuals to whom they sow spiritual things, that is to say, from their own congregations, or as we call them, “parishioners,” and “immediate neighbours.”

4. This institution of our Saviour, which was strictly and precisely the same in its spirit, as the institution of the Old Testament, (the tenth part, or tithe, being only an accident, or circumstance, not vital to the principle,) had, under the New Testament, the very same operation; and led to the same disagreeable effects, so that St. Paul found it necessary to reprove the primitive Christians, and to set their duty before them, with fully as much severity as the Prophet Malachi had used with the Jews. In other words, from the days of Moses to the days of St. Paul, and, as the memorialists report, to this very hour, “much insecurity of income (to use their own language) has resulted, and much odium has been incurred, besides minor difficulties and inconveniences, from the incumbents and parishioners being thrown into collision, in consequence of pecuniary payments to each individual clergyman, by his

immediate neighbours," (that is, in Scripture language "the Levite that is within their gates," or "the ox that treadeth out the corn,") "a circumstance which has proved a never-ceasing source of mutual dissatisfaction and agitation." Now, the argument is reduced to this form, either the Almighty has, under every dispensation of his Church, so contrived the mode of maintaining his ministers, as to render their income insecure, and to place them in angry collision with their immediate neighbours, (which, if it be not the meaning of this vituperation of tithes, I should be glad to be informed what its meaning is, and, if it be, I shall not ask whether blasphemy be too hard a name for it)—or else, the Divine Being, foreseeing the ill consequences which would occasionally arise, did yet, in his infinite wisdom, adopt a mode of clerical maintenance, the advantages of which he considered sufficient to counterbalance any accidental inconveniences. What these advantages are, how much the system tends to exercise the faith and patience of the Clergy, and to promote an habitual obedience and acknowledgment of God in the laity, and how much their mutual affection and sympathy are likely to be increased, by an arrangement which makes the income of the pastor rise and fall with the fluctuations of his people's prosperity, I shall not enter on at present. I had always thought that the inconveniences of the tithe system originated in a certain peculiarity of the human mind, in consequence of which, there have been, I fear, but very few persons since the fall of Adam, who have loved their religion better than their money, or by many degrees so well; and that the only way to remedy these inconveniences is, for the clergy to inform the people of their duty and the danger of neglecting it. If the memorialists think that the difficulty may be solved and remedied another way; if they impute these in-

conveniences, not to the radical badness of our nature, but to the incurable and necessary evils of the system itself; and if they imagine that these inconveniences can be remedied by the erection of an Ecclesiastical Commission, and the substitution of a Land Tax, I can only say, that, as the system and its inconveniences certainly existed in the days of Malachi and St. Paul, this solution and remedy do not appear to have occurred to either of those sacred persons; and, therefore, the Church of Ireland has reason to congratulate itself, that even fifty-two of its ministers have had the sagacity to make a discovery, which had escaped the whole college of the blessed Apostles and Prophets, and that, just at this particular juncture of affairs, they have been generous enough to publish their discovery, and manly enough to put their names to it.

Let me not be misunderstood or misrepresented. I do not believe that the Christian Priesthood have any divine right to tithes, or any right, in these countries, to a tenth part, more than to a fifteenth, or any other assignable proportion, except only so far as this right may be conferred, and secured, by the laws and constitution of this particular state. But I do believe, that they have a divine and indefeasible right to a decent, honourable, and independent maintenance. I do believe, also, that they have a divine right to this maintenance, from the very people among whom they discharge their ministry; and that any such attempt to escape from the inconveniences to which this must, from the frailty of human nature, inevitably lead, is to set aside an essential part of the divine institution, and is as foolish, as it is presumptuous and antisciptural.

But, if the memorialists mean, that the system of tithes renders clerical income more insecure in Ireland than in other countries, I am prepared to meet them upon this

ground also. If this be the case, it must be, either because the law is too weak to protect the incumbent or the judges afraid to do their duty, or else, because the burden of tithes falls upon the Roman Catholics or the poor.

Now, as to the first, the Court and the Barons of the Exchequer are a sufficient answer. It was in March, 1786, that the Clergy of Ireland were driven from this very Court, and the Barons of the Exchequer insulted, by the flagitious votes of a Protestant House of Commons, and the friends and officials of a Whig Government; and now, in 1836, the children of this same Protestant Aristocracy, are subscribing their thousands and tens of thousands of pounds, to enable the Clergy to come into the same Court, and obtain there that justice which, a hundred years ago, they were denied by the ravenous violence of their fathers. God grant that this may prove to be repentance, and a return to common honesty and reason. At all events, as the aristocracy proved then, that nothing but tyranny and terror could unnerve the law, they have now proved that the law is as strong as ever, and justice as immortal. The Barons did their duty then; they have done it now. The ermine of Singleton* is not dishonoured by the name of Joy.† The Court of Exchequer has proved that some men can be honest in the worst of times, and has shown to the world, how just were the venomous slanders of John Search, and the Edinburgh Reviewer, that "the learned judges have a way of just grinding a little law for present use;" that "a judge is a Government placeman, himself an interested party and protege of another interested party, in the very cause whereon he sits as judge," and that "almost all courts of law lean habitu-

* The Chief Baron of that day.

† The present Chief Baron.

ally towards the existing Government.* If, therefore, the clerical income in Ireland be insecure, it is not because the law is not plain and strong enough to protect it; and I know not what its friends can desire in this respect, except that the present conduct of the lay association may never want imitation, and that their Lordships, the Barons of the Exchequer, may never want successors, worthy to occupy the judgment-seat, which they have rendered venerable by their incorruptible intrepidity.

If the law be strong enough, the question is, on whom does the burden fall?—on the Roman Catholics, or the poor? The very reverse. Tithe is a burden on the landowner, and the tables of the Clerical Society have proved that the landowners of Ireland are the Protestant gentry. Out of 1385 benefices,† the Clerical Society have published returns from 1077, containing 11,762,834 acres, liable to £459,324 13s. 0½d. composition tithe; of which 11,047,807 acres belong in fee to Protestants, and the composition thereon amounts to £438,423 3s. 11½d.‡ This, I apprehend, sets the question at rest. If the clerical income be insecure in Ireland, it is not because it is derived from the Roman Catholics, or the poor. The real tithe payers are the Protestant aristocracy, and, in exact proportion to the honesty and religion of that body, is the income of the clergy secure, or otherwise. This is as notorious as it is true. It is morally impossible, that five out of the fifty-two memorialists could have been ignorant of it. They know it—they know that the public need not be told that they do; and, therefore, I regret, from my inmost soul, that fifty-two ministers of a God of truth, instead of

* John Search on the Law of Libel, pp. 22, 44, 45.

† Abstract of the first Report of the Commissioners of Inquiry, page 9.

‡ Dublin University Magazine, May, 1835, page 498.

rebuking the madness and cupidity of our gentry, should have ventured to rush precipitately, uncalled and unbidden, to the foot of the throne, and dare to insult that sacred majesty, who knows the real cause of their difficulties as well as they do, with as absurd and gratuitous a piece of foolish empiricism, as ever emanated from the stage of a political charlatan.

But tithe is to be supplanted by a land tax. And pray, what is it already but a charge on land, without the odiousness and instability of a tax? Has not a most reverend prelate declared his conviction before the Committee of the House of Lords, that tithe "operates solely as a reduction of rent, except so far as it may prevent improvements, which were not contemplated when the lease was granted, and the rent adjusted?"* Is this authority sufficient with the memorialists?—with the public it is unnecessary; they are aware of the fact already. What, then, will the clergy gain, by having a tax on land substituted instead of a charge on land? Do these memorialists imagine that they can persuade any sensible man, that those landlords who hate tithes, simply because they dislike paying money on any grounds, will all at once become champions of the Church, because they have no longer to pay composition rent, but must pay a land tax? I can tell these gentlemen, that the public will not believe such a palpable absurdity; and that it will be so difficult to persuade the public that the memorialists themselves believe it, that they may spare themselves the pains of the attempt. Either the gentry of this country are beginning to see the folly and wickedness of their past conduct, and to adopt a new

* Archbishop of Dublin's evidence before the Lords' Committee on Tithes in Ireland, p. 118.

course of acting, or they are not. If they are, the property of the Clergy is as secure as any other property which is recognized and protected by the law; and if not, I should be thankful to be informed, how this scheme can render it more secure than it is already. Supposing that the land tax were not to press more heavily on the landlords than the composition does, the only difference will be, that, having first destroyed the entire title to the property of the Clergy, we shall have one corporation aggregate, instead of the various corporations, sole and aggregate, at present existing. But what title can this new corporation have, in any degree, comparable to that which the old corporations possess? How can an act of parliament, that can be repealed before a session has passed, give to the Clergy a security equal to the antiquity of their present rights? Whatever title it may give, another act can take away. No property can be secure against the power of an act of parliament. The property of the Clergy is at present secure, if only the landowners have any fear of God before their eyes. If they have, it is presumptuous madness for these fifty-two individuals—not twenty of whom have one farthing of tithe property*—to attempt to represent their property as in a state of insecurity and uncertainty. With the sentence of his learned and high-minded Barons before him, how else can his Majesty regard this lamentation over the insecurity of property, which his Courts of judicature are competent, and able, and prompt to defend, except as an insult to his judges, and an affront to his royal understanding? What answer can his Majesty

* The following classification of the fifty-two memorialists, is, I believe correct.—Four of them are beneficed in the city of Dublin, with minister's money, and not tithes. One is an unbeneficed Senior Fellow of this University. Twenty-nine are stipendiary curates. The remaining eighteen alone, have any tithe property.

give but this—"If your people are disposed to violate the laws, instruct them better. If you require my assistance, my judges are honest men, and ready to protect you."

On the other hand, what permanent security can be given to ecclesiastical property by invoking a needless interposition of the legislature. The landlords, if they prove as covetous as formerly, will be as little inclined to pay the tax, as they have been to pay the tithe. It will be then, just as much as now, to use the words of the memorialists "in the power of any member of parliament at any time to revive the discussion." The landlords can make it a party question in the House of Commons. They can agitate—they can always, without the trouble of asking, find an O'Connell ready to agitate for them and for himself at the same time—they may succeed—they may have this land tax repealed—they may get an act passed at once to repeal it, and to confiscate the whole property vested in the projected board or corporation to meet the deficiency. And what manifest advantages would the enemies of ecclesiastical property then have, which they do not now possess? At present, every incumbent has an actual and recognized title to his tithe property. Should this project be carried into execution, his title is instantly destroyed. By one act of confiscation, every beneficed clergyman in the country is made a pensioner on the bounty of this board; and is left not merely at its mercy and caprice, but liable to be beggared in one moment by another act of confiscation, against which he could no longer plead his rights and the indefeasible title he now has to his property. As far as I can understand the affairs of this unhappy church, I should say, we have rather too many boards already. I believe, that those who know Ireland will join me in saying, that, if

there were fewer of them there would be fewer jobs; boards and jobs in this country maintaining a constant, direct, and very considerable proportion to each other. So that, if the government make many more of these boards and commissions, it is not impossible that the calculations of jobbing may be reduced to system, and tables published for the convenience of persons looking for places and preferments. The world is now a days far too wise to put faith in fortune-telling and astrological calculations, and those who know this country best, are apt to think that expectations of preferment on just and legitimate grounds, are pretty nearly as reasonable as casting a nativity.*

But, what effect this measure would have on the moral independence of the clergy, it is not difficult to foresee. As things are, if the beneficed clergyman be poorly paid, still he is free. He is not dismissable at the caprice of the bishop or the government. He is not obliged to recollect that he is the salaried menial of an ecclesiastical commission, and that, if he venture to think for himself, if he be too honest to change his sentiments with every variation of ministerial politics or episcopal opinions, he must think and be honest at the peril of his eleemosynary stipend. Infatuated men! to what depth of degradation would these memorialists reduce the clergy! Is it not humiliation enough, that nine and twenty curates can be induced by influence, or hope, or fear, to affix their names to such a melancholy specimen of sophistry? How far this memorial, however, can be taken to represent the

* "God forbid we should ever see the times so bad, when dangerous opinions in religion will be a means to get favour and preferment; although, even in such a case, it will be an ill traffic to gain the world and lose our own souls."
Dean Swift's Sermon on the Trinity.

sense of the clergy even of the diocese of Dublin may perhaps be negatively concluded by the names which are not appended to it. Certainly if the clergy have not signed it, I apprehend it has not been for want of solicitation. But, were I acquainted with the gentleman who is said to have been most actively engaged in getting up this memorial as a representation of the sentiments and wishes of the Irish clergy, I would ask him, whether he believes, that, if the Almighty had still spared to this church a great and illustrious prelate, now no more, and if this gentleman, in his private capacity as an unbeneficed clergyman, had come forward with this document and memorial, he could have obtained a single signature to it? A considerable number of the names attached to it, I have never even heard of before. Some few of them I have long known, at least by character, and I apprehend, that they did not obtain either their orders or their preferment, as the advocates of revolution. But these are, I hope, among the persons, whom Mr. Daly represents to have allowed their names to be affixed to the memorial before they had seen it.

The second paragraph of the memorial commences by a statement, which surpasses my understanding to comprehend—"Hitherto, that part of the united church which is in Ireland, has not only suffered much inconvenience, but has even been exposed to much reproach, from not having a power within itself, of re-constituting from time to time, according to circumstances, the districts committed to the charge of the several incumbents, or of apportioning income with any reference to the duties assigned to each."

Now, is it possible that the author of this memorial can be ignorant of the powers already vested in the ecclesi-

astical commissioners? I say the author, because, as to a large proportion of those who have signed the memorial, I hope it is not uncivil or uncharitable to say, that I can easily believe them to be in almost, if not total ignorance, upon that subject, at least. But has the author of this memorial never read the acts of 1833 and 1834, by which the ecclesiastical commission is constituted and empowered. I know some worthy clergymen have made a sort of conscience of never looking into them, and I can understand and make allowance for their feelings, though I do not think, that, in such times, voluntary ignorance of any thing of such moment to the church is to be justified. But I do not believe, that the author of this memorial can be visited with such scruples. And I would ask him, is he aware of the extensive powers of redistribution already vested in the ecclesiastical commission? If he is, what further powers does he presume to ask for? And why has he not stated to his Majesty, what these new powers are to be? Are they the powers which were to have been conferred by Lord Morpeth's appropriation bill? If so, why is this not honestly avowed? And if not, what are these new powers? and wherein do they exceed the powers already possessed by the commission? If this sentence of the memorial mean any thing, it would have been only honest to state it clearly. It would have been only reasonable for the memorialists to express themselves more distinctly, if they expected his Majesty to pay any attention to it. If it mean nothing, if the memorialists really do not know what they would have or ask for, their intruding on his Majesty with such a document, is such a procedure that I shall not choose to give it its proper name. But I ask, also, is the author of this memorial ignorant of the powers vested in the Privy Council of Ireland. The Privy Council possess

the discretionary power of breaking up all Episcopal Unions as they become void, nor can an Episcopal Union be continued beyond the existing incumbent, without their sanction being obtained at his avoidance ; and, where parishes are severally and separately too small to support a Chapel of Ease, the Privy Council, at the request of the Bishop, may cause a Chapel to be erected, in a convenient place, within a district of contiguous parts of adjoining parishes ; or set out such a district. where a Chapel had been previously erected. 7 & 8 Geo. IV. c. 43, §§ 21, 23, 24, 31. The 3 and 4 W. IV. c. 37, and the amended act of the following year have given such powers of re-formation and redistribution to the ecclesiastical commission, that I know not what further powers any one can require, except those powers of destruction which were to have been given by Lord Morpeth's bill. The commissioners have the power of granting gratuities, (§ 92,) and augmenting (§ 93) small benefices : with the consent of the Lord Lieutenant and six of the Privy Council, the diocesan, and the patron, they may, on the death of existing incumbents, divide any parish exceeding £800 per annum in value, adding any part or parts of the said parish, and its emoluments and glebes to any poor benefice adjoining, provided that they do not reduce the original parish below the value of £300 per annum, (§ 106—108.) They may, at their discretion, on the next avoidance, suspend the appointment to any benefice where there had been no divine service for the three years preceding February 1, 1833, consigning the spiritual care of the benefice to the incumbent of the adjoining parish, with a moderate stipend, or appointing and paying a stipendiary curate, (§ 116.) They may, with the consent of the Lord Lieutenant and Council, and the incumbent,

disunite any parish from any dignity or canonry to which it is appropriated or united, annexing it for the future to the vicarage or perpetual curacy therein, (§ 124,) or adjoining; (4 and 5 W. 4, c. 90, § 6;) they may make similar alterations, where no vicarages or perpetual curacies had been previously existing, (4 and 5 W. 4, c. 90, § 5,) and by this amended act, they may suspend the appointment to any sinecure dignity. (§ 1.) Now these powers look very like what the memorialists profess to ask for. If the Commissioners and the Privy Council do not possess a power of redistribution and of proportioning the income of incumbents to their duties, I and some wiser heads have mistaken the meaning of the statutes. They certainly do not possess the power of breaking up all the ecclesiastical divisions of the country, without any assignable cause, or of depriving any parish of its clergyman, where the Protestants do not amount to a certain number.—These powers they do not possess, and I am glad that they do not. But if they thought them necessary they would no doubt apply for them, and, in my humble judgment, they are the proper persons to make such an application. Perhaps the Privy Council and the Commissioners are convinced that they already have as much power as can be given to any board with safety to the Church.—Perhaps they conceive that as an experiment of such portentous magnitude is already in course of trial under their superintendence, it is but common prudence to allow time (the commissioners have yet had but two years and a half) for observing its particular results before any further experiment be set on foot. In either case I agree with them. As a humane man, I should say that the Church has been racked and tormented enough already. As a cautious man, I should say, allow it a few

moments to recover from its agonies and exhaustion before you venture the appliance of any new modes of torture. But what have political or ecclesiastical projectors to do with humanity or caution.

Since I wrote these lines I have seen the three letters published in Doctor Dickinson's name, in the Dublin Evening Post. The Doctor (if these letters be his) is certainly not ignorant of the powers of the Privy Council. His words are—"Now, the power of altering parochial divisions belongs at present to the Privy Council; this is not, therefore, the creation of a new power, but a mere transfer of it from a body which does *not*, to one which *does*, necessarily consist of *Church members*," (meaning by *Church members*, I presume, *members of the Church*.) It appears, then, that this mighty change (as far as it is prudent to avow its magnitude) is, after all, "a mere transfer" of power from a known and intelligible body, to one which happily as yet has not received a local habitation and a name. And this transfer is artfully vindicated, partly by a vague over-statement of the defined and statutable powers of the Privy Council, and partly by a gross and indecent insinuation of partiality in the Privy Council—an insinuation perfectly in keeping with the language which Mr. O'Connell has thought proper to use in the House of Commons, on the same subject. Let Doctor Dickinson rest assured that the Privy Council has long been respected in this country by every wise and honest man, and that it so well deserves to be respected, that it will be respected still, even if he and Mr. O'Connell should take it into their heads to praise it. But, if a transfer of the powers of the Privy Council is to be made to a Board, composed exclusively of Church members, why create a new board, when there is already one

in existence? The Ecclesiastical Commissioners are bound by law to be members of the Church of England; six of them are necessarily Prelates of the Church, and the remaining five bound to subscribe the following declaration, before they can act under the Commission:—

“I do solemnly, and in the presence of God, testify and declare that I am a member of the united Church of England and Ireland, as by law established.” (3 and 4 W. IV. c. 37, § 2.) Will any man living believe, that the chaplain of an Archbishop of Dublin can be ignorant of this fact, and if not ignorant, what cause can he or his friends assign for the studied concealment of it, and of the existing powers of the Commission, in the Memorial, and in the Doctor’s published letters? Dr. Sadleir is a member of the Commission, and has signed the memorial—is he ignorant of the powers of that board, and of the religion which its members are bound by law to profess? But supposing the Prelates of the Church had felt it necessary to call for the erection of a new board, are they not able to call for it themselves? Who has asked or authorized these most presumptuous Clergymen to act the intercessors with his Majesty and the Legislature, and to implore them *to allow their Episcopal Rulers to nominate Ecclesiastical Commissioners?* I do believe the indecency of this petition cannot be exceeded except by its dishonesty. Is the author of this language to be told, that the Prelates of our Church are utterly opposed to such a scheme? Is he to be told, that the Lord Primate has summoned the Bishops to a meeting for the third of March? If there was any sense of decency in these memorialists, they would have submitted their project to this venerable assembly. But the prime movers knew well what entertainment such a scheme would receive, and

therefore they sagely concluded that no time was to be lost, lest the scheme should get talked of and be defeated by the unanimous reprobation of their Episcopal Rulers. For whatever pains the Doctor has taken to evade the charge of indecent precipitancy, it is impossible to escape it. Nor can any cause but extreme haste be alleged for sending forward this memorial with so pitiful a list of dignitaries, and incumbents, and curates "wisely kept for show."

The Doctor's arguments, if such they can be called, are of this nature—

1. That under the proposed system we should be no worse than we are. It would be more to the purpose to prove that we should be better.—At least a wise man will require some proof of this kind, before he gives up a certainty for an uncertainty.

2. That the landlords of Ireland are legislators, and no better than they ought to be. I grant him both particulars. I hope our landlords will always form the majority of our legislators. And as to their morals, I cannot but think, that the memorialists would find very useful and legitimate employment in bringing them to a better condition. I have said something of this kind before, and I have seen nothing in the Doctor's letters to alter my opinion.

3. The junior fellows and scholars of Trinity College have no control over their own property, and they have no wish to make any change. I confess I cannot see the force of this. If they have lost their tails, I do not see why we should cut off ours: and if they do not wish to change, I cannot discover, how that can be any reason that we should.

4. Corporation property is much better managed than

that in the hands of individuals. Happy to hear it—I only hope this fact may be remembered, when the Irish Corporation Bill comes to be discussed.

5. The charge of the land tax will be so small to each individual, that he will have little interest in spoliation in order to be relieved from it. I have never yet heard of a tax being so small that people did not wish to be free from it. Will the land tax be lighter than tithe composition, which, by the returns of the Clerical Society, averages, in nearly twelve millions of acres, and very nearly three-fourths of the benefices in Ireland, at not quite nine pence halfpenny an Irish acre, or less than six pence, an English acre.*

6. The rest of the Doctor's arguments consist of authorities, namely, that such and such persons have said so and so. Now, granting this to be true, I cannot see what it makes for his arguments. It is very easy to say the Edinburgh Review has said this or that—or vide the Christian Examiner and the University Magazine.—Not having a very retentive memory I cannot pretend to repeat these periodicals by heart—they may have used the language the Doctor attributes to them. He has given no reference to volume or page; and therefore I must decline reading the whole series in order to ascertain the fact. But granting it, what does it prove? The question is not, who has used the argument, but is it a sound one; if not, the Doctor's references will only prove that he is not the only wrong-headed person in the community. I confess I do not admire this method of re-

* In his letter to the Rev. M. James, Dr. Dickinson has stated, from parliamentary evidence, that the amount collected in Ireland as tithe, "has never equalled one fiftieth of the gross produce, nor one third of the sum which the word tithe would imply." p. 20.

ferring for characters to magazines and newspapers, which has latterly grown so fashionable. I should not even choose to engage a curate, because his advertisements stated that his sentiments agreed with the *Christian Guardian* and the *Record Newspaper*. But this is a matter of taste. The report of the tithe committee of 1832 is more easily referred to, and I have been long aware of it. The committee of the House of Commons, and the Doctor might have added, of the House of Lords also, did then recommend, that some measure should be adopted of extinguishing tithes and preventing collision between the incumbent and his parishioners; and they expressly mentioned commutation—but they did not say one single word about concentration or a land tax. If they have meant more than they have expressed, I know not how the Doctor has discovered it; and I have yet to learn that he is justified in publishing such a discovery. As to the grounds on which their recommendation was founded, I shall not be betrayed into the indecency of bringing into this controversy a personage who is not to be named without the reverence due to his station. But this I shall say, and I hope without being guilty of disrespect to my superiors, that if committees of both Houses can be found to recommend concentration, and a land tax, under the impression that clerical income can be secured, and the unavoidable inconveniences of the tithe system can be remedied by putting an end to the collision which must ever result from pecuniary transactions between the clergyman and his immediate neighbours, I cannot but lament for this country that so many of its legislators in both houses, with such opportunities of information, and such a mass of evidence before them, could prove themselves so little acquainted with the real and inveterate cause of

the difficulties of our Clergy, so ignorant of Irish landlords, of human nature, and of the Holy Scripture.

Mr. Woodward's respectable name, I have seen with the utmost pain. I have read his pamphlet more than once, and I never could discover a single shadow of argument in it, which, if it prove any thing, will not prove too much. His reasoning would have been just as powerful in the days of Moses, Malachi, and St. Paul. It has not a particle of force, now, which could not with equal propriety have been urged against the institutions of the Old Testament and the New.

We now come to the Hon. Mr. Bingham Baring, and his motions, which appear so powerful an argument, that they are not only adduced by Dr. Dickinson in his letter of the 30th of January, but also occupy a very conspicuous place in the memorial itself. In these documents there are certain statements made with regard to the motions themselves, and also with regard to the reception which they met with in the House of Commons. These statements appear to me to be so devoid of fairness, or even truth, that I conceive it necessary to place them before my reader in immediate connection with Mr. Baring's real motions, and with the observations which were actually made by honorable members at the time; these latter I shall extract from the *Mirror of Parliament*, Part 349, p. 2352.

I shall begin with the memorial. After referring to the report of the Tithe Committee, it proceeds to say, "A measure still more fully in accordance with these suggestions, was proposed last session in the House of Commons, by the Hon. Mr. Bingham Baring, moved in the form of clauses to be introduced into the Tithe Bill, then before the House; and his amendment met with approbation of its principle, even on the part of many who

considered its adoption at that stage of the proceedings unadvisable." Who these many approvers of Mr. Baring's motions were, we are informed by Dr. Dickinson. After referring to the petition of the Irish prelates last session, he goes on to say, "And the whole measure (with the exception of that part of it which relates to the commutation) was brought forward last session by the Hon. Bingham Baring, in the form of amendments to the then Tithe Bill. This gentleman (the son of a noble lord who was a member of Sir Robert Peel's cabinet) did submit his clause to the consideration of the most zealous parliamentary advocates for the church establishment. And although they abstained from pressing them, it was confessedly on the ground, merely, that the time was not advantageous. Of the principles of the measure they strongly approved. Many months have since elapsed, and during all this time, though some of your members were fully aware that Mr. Baring's clauses had not been abandoned, no objections have been till now (publicly at least) raised against them." Let Mr. Bingham Baring now speak for himself. "I rise, Sir, for the purpose of moving the insertion of three clauses, of which I have already given notice. If the bill continue in the present state, it will leave a strong inducement to the Catholic population to interfere by violence to diminish the number of the Protestant benefices. It will be in the power of the petty agitator, in his travels about the country, to excite the peasantry, by telling them, 'Last year we got so many Protestant parsons removed, let us see if we cannot get some more abated this year:' and the House will have the honourable and learned member for Dublin annually informing it, that by the grace of God the Catholics have increased, and the Protestants

decreased in the last year ; and calling the House for the application of the revenues, no longer wanted for Protestant purposes, to the education of the general body of the community. Church reform bills will be annually presented, and there will be, consequently, a succession of struggles year after year. To remove this blot from the bill is the object of the clauses I am about to propose ; and in the first place, I wish to vest in the Ecclesiastical Commissioners all the revenues arising from the unsequestered* parishes. The second clause proposes to give the commissioners power to alter the limits of the benefices ; and the object of the third is to give them the power to endow benefices which are not among those to be sequestered. I contend that the increase of Protestants in Ireland, during the last century, has been such as fully to warrant the expectation that the religious wants of the Protestants will be at least as great hereafter as they are now. I think these clauses are necessary in the bill, and I therefore move that they be inserted."

Whether Mr. Baring's proposal to vest in the present Ecclesiastical Commissioners all the revenues arising from the unsequestered parishes is precisely the measure which the Doctor advocates—whether it can be tortured to mean the wanton erection of a new commission, and the vesting in their hands the entire property of the Church of Ireland, I shall leave the public to judge ; but certainly Mr. Baring's motion contemplates the sequestration of 860 parishes in Ireland—it was originated by that sequestration being a vital part of the bill then in committee, and therefore, as this motion is, on Dr. Dickinson's own statement, neither more

* The Mirror of Parliament has '*sequestered*.' It evidently should be '*unsequestered*,' which is the word reported in the newspapers of that date.

nor less than the "whole measure" of the memorialists, (the principle of commutation alone excepted,) it follows with the force of demonstration, that the measure proposed in the memorial, goes on the prospective supposition of a scheme of sequestration, although for some prudential reasons this is carefully kept out of sight.

The second and third clauses of Mr. Baring's motion are to vest in the Commissioners certain powers, which, as we have seen, are, to the utmost extent consistent with prudence, vested partly in their hands already, and partly in the hands of the Privy Council.

Let us now see what reception this motion met from the house. But eight members spoke on the occasion; five on the side of Government, and but three of the Conservative members, Mr. Shaw, Sir R. Peel, and Mr. A. Lefroy. Mr. Shaw said, "I am no enemy to a better distribution of church property; but I cannot consent to the proposition of my honourable friend. [*i. e.* to concentration.] It would go to vest the whole power and property of the Church in the present Ecclesiastical Commissioners, who are a body quite too irresponsible for that purpose. The adoption of *any part* of the amendment of my honourable friend must take place, *if at all*, after a consideration which, under present circumstances, it is impossible the subject can receive."—Sir R. Peel said, "I hope my honourable friend will not take a vote on this occasion, but defer his motion to a stage when it can meet with more deliberate discussion. *To the division into districts I decidedly object*, [*i. e.* to redistribution,] and I wish to have more time to consider the effects of these clauses." To which he afterwards added, "It is clearly inexpedient to discuss the principle involved in the clauses of my honourable friend at this late period of the session." Mr. Lefroy merely said,

"I agree with the right honourble baronet in hoping that the honourable member will withdraw his amendments for the present." Will these few sentences from the only Conservatives who took part in the debate justify Dr. Dickinson in stating of "the most zealous parliamentary advocates for the Church establishment," that, "although they abstained from pressing them, it was confessedly on the ground *merely*, that the time was not advantageous. Of the principle of the measure [namely, of concentration and redistribution] they highly approved." Whether the Doctor's statement is not actually the reverse of what occurred, my reader can judge for himself.

Lord Morpeth, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Hume, Lord John Russell, indeed, did one and all admire the principle contained in the motion. Mr. Hume, that most zealous parliamentary advocate of the Establishment, declared that it was the proposition which he had brought forward fifteen years ago; and the Chancellor of the Exchequer said, "On those who agree in the principle of appropriation, these clauses impose no sacrifice, and call on them to make no surrender of principle." Really, if Mr. Baring's motion be the same as the project in the memorial, then on the Doctor's own showing we can pretty easily discover, who are the friends of his favourite scheme, and on what a basis of spoliation and sequestration it must rest, in order to secure their admiration and support. Were I to present a memorial to his Majesty, I should conceive it rather indelicate to make such a reference to a debate in either House of Parliament. But when I couple this want of the common forms of decency with the utter disingenuousness with which it is adduced, I do say that I doubt, whether since the Reformation such an instance of

gross disrespect has ever been shewn to the King of England by any of his Clergy.

Dr. Dickinson further endeavours to justify this project, by alleging in his third letter the authority of the petition presented by the Irish Prelates to the House of Lords last session. His words are, "Again, you must be aware that the proposal of re-distribution of income did not originate with the present memorial. It was distinctly suggested in the petition to the House of Lords, which was presented last session by a majority of the Irish Prelates. To those Prelates, therefore, I shall refer the defence of their own proposal." Whether it would have been more cautious and more respectful if the Doctor had first consulted those Prelates, before he ventured to put such a construction on their words, will not be a very difficult question to any person of discretion or good feeling. The only words in the petition that can, by possibility, be tortured to such a meaning, are those noble expressions of disinterested devotion with which these venerable men declared their willingness to submit to any alternative, or any diminution of their income, rather than suffer the destruction of the Protestant religion in Ireland to be effected by the appropriation clauses. And now Dr. Dickinson has thought proper to adduce these very words, as the origination and first proposal of a measure, which he confesses to be (with the exception of commutation) identically the same as Mr. Baring's motion; a motion, as I have already proved, having no substance, existence, or foundation, except the spoliation and appropriation clauses; a motion which, in so many words, supposes and recognizes the sequestration of 860 parishes; the very measure against which the petition was presented. It is hard to say whether Dr. Dickinson intends such an assertion as a compliment to the under-

standings of his readers, or of his episcopal rulers. The words of the Bishops' petition are these—"If, notwithstanding the alterations which have been made by late enactments in the concerns of the Church, improvements are still required, your petitioners are most willing to contribute to their introduction: and if the distribution of the church revenues be so unequal as to impair her usefulness, they are desirous to see them applied in such a way as best may increase her efficiency, seeking only to render her, under God's grace, a more powerful instrument of edification." Now, if these words were intended as a proposal of any kind, and, above all, as a proposal of re-distribution of income, *such as Dr. Dickinson and Mr. Baring contemplate*, I believe I am not the only person in the country who will be surprised by the discovery, and I hope I shall not be guilty of any impropriety in asking, if this was indeed the meaning and intention of this petition, why did the most reverend Prelate of this diocese refuse to sign it?

But we are referred to the late Bishops of Ferns and Cloyne as advocates of the principle of concentration which is put forward by the memorialists. Dr. Dickinson has stated this still more confidently in his third letter than in the first; I shall give both passages. In his letter of the 18th January, he has thus expressed himself—"The advantages of concentration were, I understand, fully appreciated long since, by two individuals, whose wisdom was respected by all, and whose anxiety for the support of the Establishment, was never doubted by any; I believe I am correct in saying, that the lamented friends of the Church, the late Bishops of Ferns and of Cloyne, suggested such a concentration. Their method of effecting this could not, indeed, now be adopted, because subsequent

Acts of Parliament interfere; this, however, affects only the details, and not the principle of the measure." In his third letter he writes—"Again, the concentration of the Church property was recommended—(I stated in a former letter that such had been my information, and its correctness has not been denied)—by the valued friends of the Church, the late Bishops of Ferns and Cloyne; the present proposal on this head differs, indeed, in details from their measure, which has been rendered impracticable by subsequent Acts of Parliament; in its principle, however, it is not different." As Dr. Dickinson has received from Dr. Elrington a positive and distinct contradiction of his statements regarding the Bishop of Ferns, it is to be presumed that he will publicly retract what he has said. There is not the very slightest foundation for such a statement, and how any one so thoroughly conversant as Dr. Dickinson must be, with the utter detestation and abhorrence, which that great and good man ever felt and expressed of innovation of any kind, could circulate such an insult to his memory, and such a contradiction to the whole tone of his writings, and the tenor of his upright life, is beyond my comprehension, and that of every person, with whom I have conversed on the subject. I do indeed lament, that while the grave is scarce closed on these venerated Prelates, and we can scarce persuade ourselves, that we are indeed bereft for ever of these "Horsemen and Chariots" of our afflicted Church, such a use should be made of their names. They are no longer here to vindicate themselves from an aspersion, that would have excited their burning indignation. The Bishop of Ferns was, at all times, to the last hour of his life, opposed to any change in the tithe system—to commutation, and above all to concentration. When he found

that, by the persevering cupidity of the Protestant landlords and aristocracy, a change was forced upon the country, he proposed a plan (which, by the way, the Bishop of Cloyne disapproved of,) one of whose chief recommendations, in his judgment, was, that it was *opposed* to concentration. To any one at all acquainted with the Bishop's character or writings, a vindication of this kind is as needless, as the occasion of it is distressing.

Dr. Dickinson seems to lament the frightful condition of the country, and the dangers and sufferings of the Clergy. Such an admission is valuable from any friend of the present government. But if the people of this country perceive, that such persons as Dr. Murray, and Dr. Kinsella, and Mr. O'Connell, find entertainment at the vice-regal court; if they perceive, that by the positive orders of government the assistance of police and military is withheld until a violation of the peace has taken place, and any thing which could tend to the prevention of violence and crime in the collection of clerical income is forbidden, although the police are bound by oath, *to prevent*, to the utmost of their power, all offences against His Majesty's peace; if it is necessary to vindicate His Majesty's Court of Exchequer by awarding attachments against the confidential agents of the government, it is not very difficult to imagine the consequences, and it is altogether impossible to discover, how any change in the collection, management, or distribution of clerical income, can materially improve the state of the country, or the condition of our persecuted and slandered Clergy. It was very truly stated in 1832 by a most reverend Prelate, that "many of the resisters to tithe entertain, or endeavour to spread the notion, that they are favoured by govern-

ment.”* Until their minds are thoroughly disabused of this notion, peace and safety are out of the question.

This document and memorial hold out golden hopes to the Clergy and the State; to the one it is promised that this plan will leave the CHURCH REVENUE UNIMPAIRED. These capitals are not mine; they are so printed in the original, a mode of being emphatic, borrowed, I imagine, from those veracious documents, the hand-bills of the New State Lottery, and Mr. George Robins’ auctioneering advertisements. It is not uncommon for the advocates of revolution, *maria montesque polliceri*. Unfortunately, however, this glorious prospect is considerably obscured in the memorial; where His Majesty is told “that the purchase-money paid over to the above-mentioned Ecclesiastical Commissioners, would, if employed by them in the purchase, from time to time, of land or rent-charges, produce a revenue nearly equal to the aggregate amount of the present income of incumbents.” Meantime the nation is promised a surplus of from £200,000 to £300,000 per annum: and to crown all, while the treasury is to be overflowing with this surplus, and the Clergy are to be *nearly as rich as they are at present*, the patentees declare, that their contrivance will reconcile all those of opposite parties who are not bent on the overthrow of the Establishment. Who can withstand such a combination of motives? *Res, tempus, pericula, egestas, belli spolia magnifica magis, quam oratio, hortentur*. But I should be glad to be informed, who these opposite parties may be: for, as to the whigs, infidels, radicals, dissenters, and Roman Catholics, they have been any thing rather than opposite parties for several years: so that I do not see any need of

* Archbishop of Dublin’s evidence before the Lords’ Committee p. 113.

reducing the universe to its elemental chaos merely in order to reconcile people that are disposed to agree very well if they be left to themselves. Any little quarrels they may have, they can settle without our interference. They agree well enough to carry on their quintuple alliance against the Church without any danger of a rupture, at least until they come to divide the spoils. If those, who are called tories, and conservative whigs, be meant, I believe that the Church had about as little to say to their quarrel, as it can have to do with their reconciliation. The only remaining parties that can be in danger of coming into collision, are the clergy and the landlords. I hope these are not the opposite parties alluded to. I trust that the landlords are not bent on the overthrow of the Establishment; and as to the clergy, it is hard to find fifty among them all who can be brought to sanction any attempt that bears such an appearance. But if the clergy and the landlords are the opposite parties not bent on the overthrow of the Establishment, how is this scheme to reconcile them? No surplus can be created, except by depreciating the clerical property as low as possible; then, by the government buying up the tithes at about half what they ought to be worth, which must needs dispose the clergy to reconciliation, especially as the income, which they can purchase by the produce of this sale of their tithes to government, will be about one-half of what their tithe composition is at present worth. The next step in this surplus manufacture will be, to compel the landlords to pay the full amount of the tithe to the last farthing for some years, till, by increased security and amount, the value of tithes is raised to the utmost, at which maximum it is to be redeemed by a land tax, which must rather exceed the full amount of the tithe, in order to cover the expense of collecting.

Again, after these purchases and redemption shall have been effected, the lands purchased by the projected Board of Ecclesiastical Undertakers are to be subject to the new land tax, or they are not. If they *are*, here is a new drawback on the pittance of the clergy. The present Ecclesiastical Commission, I am informed, costs the Church about £12,000 a-year. How much would be the cost of the Doctor's Undertakers, who, like other undertakers, are, I suppose, to profit by our woes, and to preside over our obsequies? And after all, the Clergy are to be included among their own debtors, and to pay their share of the tax, which is to be laid on the laity in lieu of tithes. I am beginning to suspect, that this whole scheme may be a hoax, which the Doctor has got up in order to amuse us during the cold weather. But if he and his brother Memorialists *seriously* propose this scheme to the nation, as a measure of justice or reconciliation, they are really "Hibernis ipsis Hiberniores."

On the other hand, if the lands of the clergy *are not* to be liable to this land tax, what a pretty considerable prospect we shall have of the lay landowners becoming attached to their pastors. Really this seems something like laying the foundations of another French Revolution. But whether the lands of the clergy be taxed or not, the lay landowners will be worse off than they are now, if there is to be any surplus created. How so hopeful a scheme will tend to reconcile the landlords to the clergy,

* Before the duration of the Irish Parliaments was limited by the Octennial Bill, the administration and patronage in Ireland was surrendered to the heads of the Whig Aristocracy. They were styled the undertakers of the King's business, an ominous title, but most justly applied; 'as, from education and from habit,' said the late Lord Charlemont, 'they were well fitted to preside at the funeral of the common weal.'—*Phelan's History of the Policy of the Church of Rome in Ireland (Introduction, p. 18)*—a work which deserves far more attention than it has yet received.

remains to be proved ; but the landlords, I shrewdly suspect, will, in the event, be sadly out of humour with themselves and with one another. It is at least probable, that they may feel somewhat like the horse in the fable, and lament that, in an unlucky hour, they ever invited the government to assist them in hunting tithes and parsons, or that they ever suffered such a saddle to be put upon their backs. It is not unlikely, that they may unite once more to shake off this land tax, and, as I before said, supply the deficiency, as far as it will go, by confiscating the melancholy concentration of Ecclesiastical property. Concentration ! It is the concentration of all that was once loved and revered in the sepulchral urn. It is the concentration of all the diffused virtues and powers of the Church, that they may be immolated as a grand and final sacrifice on the altar of national cupidity.

There is another consideration of great importance. Does the author of this scheme intend this as an experiment, on which to found a similar revolution in the Ecclesiastical property of England ? Is Ireland merely the place where the wedge is to be introduced ? What his intentions may be I cannot take on myself to say. But this I know, that when a Most Reverend Prelate, whose evidence I have already referred to, was asked by the Committee of the House of Lords this question—"What is your opinion of the permanent system upon which the provision for the Church should be placed in Ireland ?" His Grace replied in these words—"I should mention, that I think it would be a very dangerous thing to legislate in a way that should carry on the face of it the appearance of relief for Ireland, without holding out a prospect at least of some, *if not the same system of relief in England* ; because if it were understood that relief from what has been

lately, and is still in many instances, complained of as a grievance in England, was given in Ireland in consequence of violent and turbulent measures, it seems to me that that would be a bonus on insurrection in England, and I have no doubt the most fearful results would follow."* It is not my part to make any commentary on the Most Rev. Prelate's words; but if the author of the memorial designs this scheme of revolution to extend to the Church in England, it is extremely uncandid not to state this explicitly in the memorial, and most disingenuous to rest a total alteration of the ecclesiastical constitution of the whole empire on the local circumstances and difficulties of Ireland.

Dr. Dickinson calls on the Clergymen who have signed the protest to suggest some other scheme, if they disapprove of his. I shall submit one to his approval, which will not even require a commission. It is simply this: that every landowner in Ireland be desired to send in, to his Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Home Department, categorical answers, under his hand and seal, to these three queries:—

1. Do you wish that the Church of Ireland be maintained in its full vigour, efficiency, and respectability, and its revenues devoted to the purposes heretofore and at present recognised by the law and constitution?

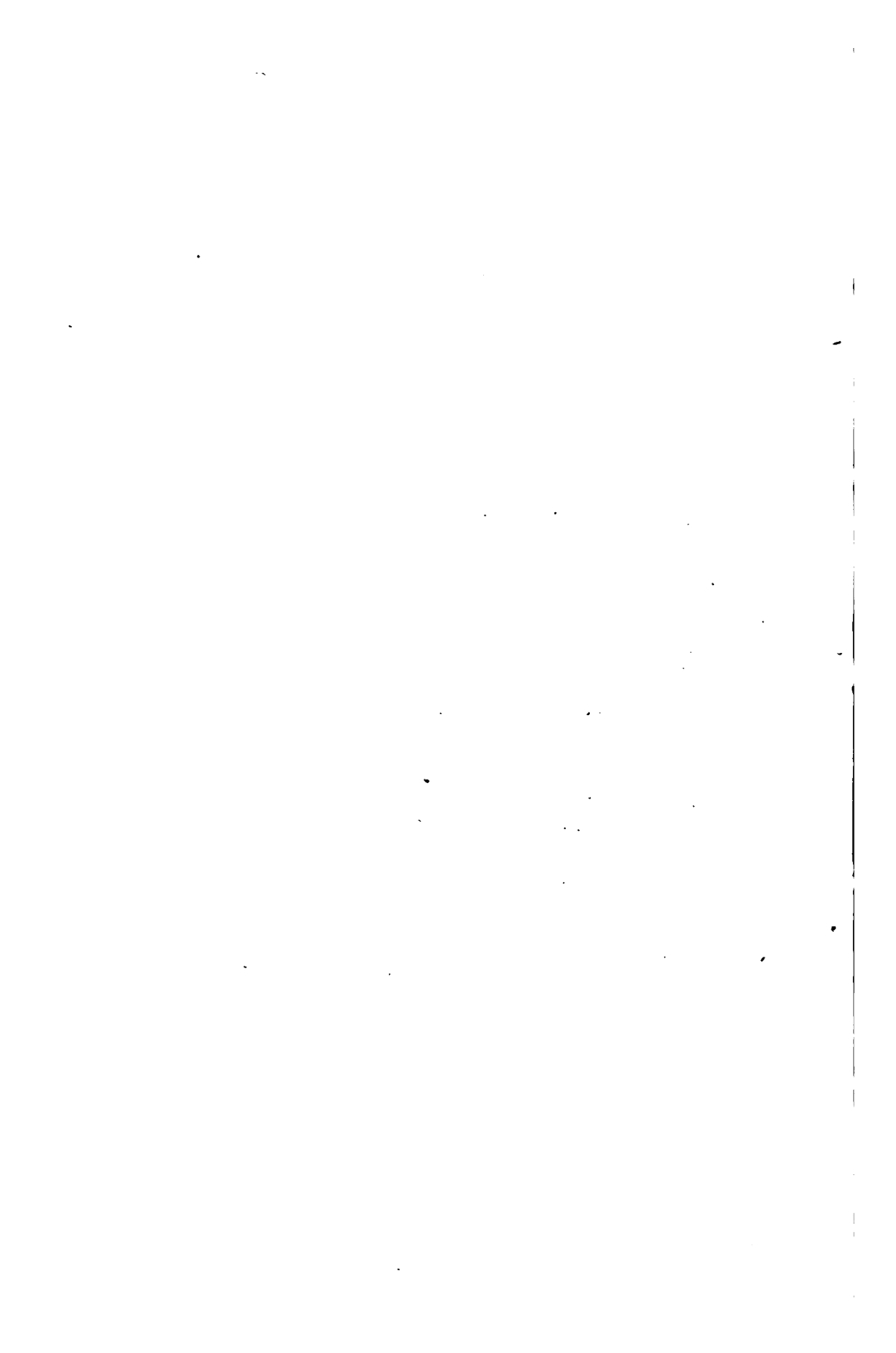
2. Do you wish to have its vigour, efficiency, and respectability, totally and finally destroyed, and its revenues handed over to the Roman Catholic Clergy?

3. Are you equally indifferent to all religions, and is it merely your wish to get the property of the Clergy into your own pockets?

These three questions would discover our real condition.

* Archbishop of Dublin's evidence before the Lords' Committee, p. 105.

They would compel those to decide, who at present act as if they wished for things incompatible, and destructive to each other. Matters cannot remain as they are. Unless the administration and the landowners act in harmony, and are united to make the laws they really wish for, and to cause them to be observed without respect of persons, the destruction of this country is inevitable. As to the Clergy of Ireland, if they are to be made the centre against which every ill passion in the community may be discharged with impunity; if their lives and properties are to be continually exposed to the assassin and the agitator; if every prize for learning and talent is to be sacrificed to a fanatical spirit of re-distribution, no person who can earn a decent livelihood in any other profession, will enter into the sacred function. We are rapidly moving towards this consummation; the Divinity Class, in the University of Dublin, which has hitherto averaged at about one hundred and forty students, has within the last year sunk to forty. So small a number is utterly inadequate to supply the churches, or to fill up the vacancies which are annually caused by death.



APPENDIX.

Letter to the Editor of the Dublin Evening Post, from the Rev.
C. Dickinson, D.D. Vicar of St. Anne's, Dublin, and Chaplain
to his Grace the Archbishop of Dublin.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE DUBLIN EVENING POST.

January 20, 1836.

SIR—May I beg you will give insertion in your paper to the accompanying letter, which was declined by the Editor of the Evening Mail.

I do not know, what your sentiments may be with respect to the subject involved, but I trust your love of truth, and your anxiety for fair discussion, on a matter which concerns the interests of the nation, will induce you to give a place in your columns to temperate letters, though on opposite sides. Such a course does not pledge you, but merely gives your readers an opportunity for candid judgment.

I am, Sir, yours, very truly,

CHARLES DICKINSON.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE EVENING MAIL.

January 18, 1836.

SIR—I have read with much attention your remarks of Friday evening last, on the proposed Memorial to the King, which is now in circulation among the Clergy of this Diocese.

I think it right to state to you at once, that I shall not either now, or on any future occasion, advert to any personalities, no matter from what quarter they may come, or against what individual they may be directed.

The settlement of the difficulties under which the Church has laboured, is so infinitely important, that any measure which proposes to effect this, demands the utmost calmness of consideration. It was for the very purpose, indeed, of giving the Clergy the fullest opportunity of dispassionate delibe-

ration, that the memorial in question, together with a brief explanation of it, has been printed for circulation.

Nor is it only recently that this measure has been proposed. It was, in its most essential parts, suggested nearly four years ago, by the Archbishop of Dublin, in his evidence before the House of Lords. This evidence has been printed, and very generally perused, and his suggestions, (adopted in substance by the House of Commons' Committee in 1832,) for terminating the difficulties of the Church, were strongly recommended for adoption in an article which appeared some time since in the Dublin University Magazine.

You have stated two objections to the proposed measure. These I shall specify in succession, and lay before you my reasons for not admitting their validity.

Your first objection is, that the formation of the contemplated Board would deprive the Clergy of their vested rights. Now, I would ask, have the junior Fellows and Scholars of Trinity College no vested rights in its property, because that property is under the management of a corporate board? Would they conceive that their vested rights would be strengthened, or their income improved, either as to amount or security, by dividing the property into several distinct parcels, and leaving each Fellow and Scholar to look after his own portion? The College has a permanent corporation; they would not think it for their interests to break this up into as many corporations sole as there are Fellows and Scholars. That is, they would not forego their own constitution for the purpose of adopting that which belongs at present to the Church. Let the Church then consider, whether it would not be for its advantage to have its constitution improved into that which has been happily conferred upon the College.

Your second objection is, that the formation of the Board would render confiscation more easy. Now, it is curious to observe that the Edinburgh Review argued that Church Property might be more reasonably alienated than that of a college, on the very ground that the Church was not represented by a permanent corporation, but was merely a bundle of corporations sole. Its argument was, that at the death of each incumbent a corporation was extinct, and that there was no necessity to revive it, inasmuch as no one had a right of succession. Be this as it may, I cannot discern how the formation of such a Board would give greater facilities for passing an Act of Parliament. Our present defence is, that a measure to confiscate would require the united consent of King, Lords, and Commons; and this defence is not in any way affected by the proposed change.

You may, however, have designed (though you have not expressed this) to direct this objection, not against the formation of the Board, but against the suggested concentration of property. I beg of you, however, to reconsider whether this would not considerably diminish the danger of alienation. There is now a pressure of the people for the extinction of tithes, because

each individual perceives that, by their extinction, his own pecuniary interests would be advanced by the amount of payment he has to make. It is not merely that there is a property to be plundered, but the division of the spoil is ready made. Were the property concentrated into land, the minds of the people would not be equally assailed by temptation ; for the immediate tenants of the estates would be aware that the destruction of the establishment would not increase their property, but would merely change their landlords. And the rest of the community would be little interested for spoliation with a view to diminish general taxation, because the saving to each individual thus produced would be imperceptible.

If it be relied upon, that under Lord Stanley's Act, landlords and not the populace, will hereafter have to pay, let it be remembered that landlords are legislators, and that in former times, the Agistment Act was their donation to the Church. Landlords are continually pressed upon to lower rents. This would be accomplished without pecuniary loss to them, by the extinction of that portion of rent which is now paid to the Clergy.

Again, if it be apprehended that some government, without any pressure upon them from the people or the landlords, might be anxious to seize upon the Church property, for the purpose of diverting it to some state necessity, it should be considered that this temptation is just as strong at present as it would be if the property were concentrated, because, on the extinction of tithes, they could instantly substitute a land tax, and thus increase the revenue of the nation.

The advantages of concentration were, I understand, fully appreciated long since, by two individuals, whose wisdom was respected by all, and whose anxiety for the support of the Establishment was never doubted by any. I believe I am correct in saying, that the lamented friends of the Church, the late Bishops of Ferns and of Cloyne, suggested such a concentration. Their method of effecting this could not, indeed, now be adopted, because subsequent Acts of Parliament interfere ; this, however, affects only the details, and not the principle of the measure.

I am persuaded that all the Clergy are fully convinced how much their efforts to promote religion have been impeded by the collisions which have arisen from their present mode of payment. If any, however, have not reflected upon this, I shall beg of them to peruse with attention a published letter addressed to Lord Stanley, by one respected by all his brethren, the Rev. Henry Woodward, Rector of Fethard. The measure to which this letter relates should not, indeed, be rejected by any without an attentive consideration of this most important pamphlet.

In conclusion, I implore your readers not to allow themselves, in so momentous a crisis as the present, to be biassed by personal or party prejudices, but to give a calm and dispassionate attention to a question involving not only the temporal welfare of the Establishment, but in a great degree also, the religious efficiency of the Church—the peace, the safety, and the in-

tegrity of the empire—the deliverance of this distracted and unhappy country from the frightful evils so long endured, and the danger of still worse in future. If through the influence of impatient resentment and hostile prejudice, they reject the opportunity now offered, the last that probably will ever be afforded us, they will hereafter reflect with the anguish of late and unavailing regret on the then irremediable miseries which they might have prevented, or at least endeavoured to prevent, by bringing themselves in time to reason calmly, and to act on the suggestions of dispassionate and single-minded public spirit.

I am, Sir, yours very truly,

CHARLES DICKINSON.

Dr. Dickinson's Second Letter.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE DUBLIN EVENING POST.

January 26, 1836.

SIR—As you were kind enough to insert a former letter of mine on the subject of the petitions now in circulation among the Clergy of this diocese, perhaps you will be so good as to give insertion also to the accompanying letter, written in answer to inquiries forwarded to me by a distinguished member of Parliament. I fully understand that your compliance with this request does not pledge your opinions. It merely indicates, what ought to belong to all journalists, a willingness to permit free and candid discussion.

I am, Sir, your's very truly,

CHARLES DICKINSON.

January 26, 1836.

SIR—I would wish that all persons would imitate your good sense in seeking further information concerning a measure, whose importance is confessed, instead of hastily rejecting it, on the ground that some of its details have not been made sufficiently intelligible.

As you do not object to the principles of the measure, I shall not occupy your time by any observations on this head, but shall proceed at once to explain the mode proposed for effecting a commutation of tithe property.

Let it be remembered, in the first place, that the government grants for Irish purposes, amount at present to £400,000 per annum. (They have been more than £500,000, and must hereafter, probably, exceed that sum, if the recommendation of the Poor Inquiry and Education Commissioners be attended to.)

If, then, an outlay of the same sum is continued, the public will be no loser; and if, by means of such outlay, a larger sum can be obtained for such purposes, Ireland will be manifestly a gainer. Your difficulty seems to be to ascertain in what way such an object can be accomplished.

To speak briefly, it is to be done by the nation availing itself of an opportunity of buying, at about 16 years' purchase, and selling at near 30. This will appear by the following sketch :—

1st. It is suggested that government should purchase the tithes, at the rate of purchase fixed on by the Tithe Commission of 1852, of which Mr. (Lord) Stanley was chairman. This is something of a higher rate than tithes have always sold for ; but when a sale is compulsory, it is usually considered fair to fix the outside price.

2d. The purchase money is to be raised by the sale of perpetual government annuities.

3d. These annuities to be paid out of the national funds.

4th. The tithes (or whatever land tax or redemption may be substituted) to be applied for the defraying of those local expenses which have been hitherto met by government grants ; but which being for Irish purposes, may fairly be defrayed by money raised in Ireland, without the imposing of any fresh burden upon it.

5th. The purchase money of the tithes handed over to the contemplated board, to be laid out by them in buying up rents, or rent-charges in England, or wheresoever they can be advantageously procured.

It has been suggested that Government should purchase not only the ecclesiastical, but the lay tithes, and even what may be termed the suppressed tithes—that is, that the owners of the tithe-free land (about one seventh of Ireland) should be regarded as *owners* of their own *tithes*, and should be compelled to sell them at the same rate as other lay impropritors. As this last provision, however, is not essential, and has merely a respect to financial convenience, it is unnecessary to enlarge upon it.

There may be some difference of opinion as to the *amount* of surplus which the nation would gain, (consisting of the difference between the purchase money, the amount of interest it would have to pay for, and the amount of annual property *sold* to it by the church ;) but this surplus would, on *the lowest calculation*, be more (even after the buying up of lay-advwsons, and providing for the necessary expenses of the new board) than was contemplated in the appropriation clause of last session.

And it is hoped, consequently, that those who pressed the appropriation clause, may now give up that measure.

They, indeed, argued for it solely on the ground that there were parishes, where the income was large, and the number of resident Protestants few or none ; but they did not advert to a circumstance which ought to have been attended to, on the other hand, namely, that there were many parishes where the income was wholly inadequate to provide sufficiently for the spiritual wants of the resident members of the Establishment. A local congestion was, in fact, represented as a general plethora. It is also admitted on all hands that our curates are most inadequately paid. The Church could make a more satisfactory provision for them, were it allowed to regard its property

as a whole, and to regulate the use of it, instead of being compelled, as it has, to employ each portion of it with reference to the spot where it was raised. This compulsion has not only made its whole funds less useful than they might have been, but, in addition, has exposed the Establishment to obloquy. Had the Church power over the distribution of its own funds, it could diminish the income of incumbents whose duties are less urgent, and employ the withdrawn sum in increasing the income of curates, and of those incumbents who are now inadequately provided for.

The proposed measure has been vehemently censured by the extreme parties. This was to have been expected; because when parties have been long opposed, they get into the habit of thinking that what is gain to the one must be a detriment to the other. They do not pause to examine whether mutual advantages may not be obtained. The one takes it for granted that because the Church is to gain, the nation is to lose, and the other *vice versa*.

It should, therefore, be pointed out, that the nation and the Church would both gain by the proposed arrangement. First—in a pecuniary sense—the nation, by the surplus which would become available for general purposes—the Church, by its obtaining its full income, and having this placed not only on a more secure foundation, but within its own control, so as to have the power of distributing it, according to its own judgment may seem best for the promotion of its proper objects. But, secondly—and this is by far the most important benefit—*both* would be gainers by the termination of these collisions, which must arise from time to time in a country circumstanced like this, (even though they should appear occasionally to be suppressed,) as long as there are any pecuniary transactions between each clergyman and his parishioners. These collisions have impeded the usefulness of our clergy, while they have produced such crimes, and are fixing in the minds of the people such habits of resistance to the laws of the land, as must inevitably stop the growing prosperity of any country.

As you have very properly desired an answer, not for yourself as an individual, but for the information of the public, I shall send a copy of this letter to the newspapers, without mentioning your name, however, as there is not time for my seeking your permission to do so,

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient humble servant,

CHARLES DICKINSON.

Observations on the Memorial, by the Rev. Edward Stopford, D.D.
Archdeacon of Armagh.

The author of the paper accompanying the Memorial to the King, in which he states reasons why the Prelates have not been consulted, is requested to sign his name to it, that the Clergy may judge of the weight and authority, which are sufficient to counterbalance and supersede those of the Episcopal Bench.

Churchmen, previous to proposing a measure calculated to produce disunion in the Church, however excellent that measure may appear to them, ought maturely to consider whether they have the means of carrying it.

The authors of this measure cannot carry it without great influence in Church and State. Do they possess both, or either?

Do they possess influence with the Clergy? The array of signatures to the Memorial, not including 20 persons entitled to tithes composition, after some weeks of exertion and influence, may answer this question for the present. It will be more fully answered by the number of signatures to the counter declaration.

Do they possess influence with the Bishops? They have not ventured even to submit the plan to them. They endeavour to exclude them, because they know that almost the whole of the Bench is opposed to this plan.

Do they possess influence with Government? The head of his Majesty's Government has disclaimed the plan.

Are they aware that a measure of this nature cannot be entertained by the House of Commons, unless recommended by the Crown? Have they obtained the consent and promise of his Majesty's Ministers, to advise the King to recommend it?

Are they aware that the measure is a money bill—a money bill of a most extensive kind, involving several millions sterling? Do they know that a money bill cannot be introduced, until its leading provisions shall have been first adopted as resolutions by a Committee of the whole House? Have they the means of proposing and carrying such resolutions? They have not.

Supposing, but not admitting, that they had the support and countenance of his Majesty's Ministers; supposing them able to carry the measure through the Commons, have they influence to carry it through the House of Lords, in opposition to the opinions and wishes of both Bishops and Clergy? Most certainly not.

Why then propose a measure which may cause even a trifling disunion in the Church; and the only result of which will be to destroy whatever influence the proposers may possess—and to publish their want of influence to the world!

EDWARD STOPFORD, Archdeacon of Armagh.

January 29, 1836.

Anonymous Answer to Archdeacon Stopford's Observations.

Those who have signed the petitions to the King, Lords, and Commons, now lying at Messrs. MILLIKEN'S, beg leave to remind their brethren, that the deliberative opinion of the Bishops cannot be had at an earlier period than their meeting towards the end of March; and, BEFORE THIS, the whole question is likely to be discussed in Parliament, and settled under the provisions of *some* bill.

Some persons having expressed apprehensions that the petition involves an approval of the principle of what was called, "the appropriation clause," the framers of it deem it requisite to submit to their brethren their utter disavowal of this. It is indeed not unnatural for both of the parties, who have been so long opposed, to conclude at once, the one, that since the State is to be benefited, it must be *at the expense of the Church*; the other, that if the Church is to be benefited, it must be at the expense of the State. The present plan, however, contemplates a *mutual* benefit to the State, an advantage not produced by any spoliation of the Establishment; to the Church, a benefit, not imposing any new burden on the nation.

Dr. Dickinson's Third Letter.

TO THE CLERGY WHO HAVE SIGNED A "PROTEST AGAINST A
PROPOSED ADDRESS TO THE KING," &c.

January 30, 1836.

REV. GENTLEMEN—When I received yesterday evening a copy of your "protest against a proposed address (now signed by forty-eight Clergymen) to the King and both Houses of Parliament," I applied myself to its perusal with that calm attention, to which a document emanating from you was undoubtedly entitled.

You must excuse me, however, for remarking that the title of that document does not describe its character properly. It is not a protest against the address or the measure proposed, but against the framers of it. You must be conscious that you have carefully abstained from advancing a single argument against the measure itself, and have merely informed the public that you disapproved of it. You have pronounced the "reasoning contained in the prefatory observations of the memorial as most fallacious," while you apparently trust that your authority will be regarded as a sufficient confirmation of the assertion.

I shall not feel it necessary to defend your brethren who have signed the petitions in question, from the charges of presumption and disingenuousness which you have brought against them, because they feel that it is not their character, but the soundness of the proposed measure which is to be brought before public consideration. The unhappy difficulties of the Church are felt by them too strongly; they have too much anxiety for the settlement of them, to permit them to waste that time in discussions concerning themselves, which all the friends of the Church are bound to bestow on the consideration of the most likely methods to preserve it.

One charge, however, I think it advisable to notice, because it may be regarded as amounting to an objection to the measure itself, namely, that it "has been suddenly and partially put forth, without allowing time for inquiry and deliberation."

This charge, indeed, which was advanced in another quarter, I have already replied to, in a letter published some time since in the *Evening Post*, and to this letter no answer has been given.

Let me again briefly state to you, that the most important portion of the proposal was suggested about four years ago by the Archbishop of Dublin, in his evidence before the Lords; that this evidence was printed and very generally perused; that it has not been arraigned by the friends of the Church at least; that, on the contrary, it has been referred to, or its principles advocated as perfectly unobjectionable, (vide the *Dublin University Magazine*, and also the *Christian Examiner*.) If the suggestions in that evidence were considered dangerous, why have not the Clergy pointed out this danger during the long time which has elapsed, more especially as those suggestions were actually adopted as the basis of the settlement of Church property, by the tithe commission of 1832, of which Mr. (now Lord) Stanley was chairman. This assuredly conferred on them a sufficiently important character.

Again, the concentration of the Church property was recommended—(I stated in a former letter that such has been my information, and its correctness has not been denied)—by the valued friends of the Church, the late Bishops of Ferns and Cloyne. The present proposal on this head differs, indeed, in details from their measure, which has been rendered impracticable by subsequent acts of Parliament. In its principle, however, it is not different.

Now, if you agree with these respected and lamented Prelates as to the expediency of concentration, you must waive your objections to the formation of an Ecclesiastical Board; as any concentration of our property would necessarily require a board for its management.

It has been suggested that this Board should be appointed by our Bishops. Some Clergymen have, I am aware, withheld their signatures from the petitions, on the ground that they considered it dangerous to entrust this function to our Prelates. I do not think you will be *unanimous* at least in admitting this objection.

They might think it expedient to appoint themselves in conjunction with the Deans, Archdeacons, and other Dignitaries; and also that Diocesan Committees should be formed, to supply the Central Board with information and suggestions concerning each diocese. All that we should seek from Parliament is leave to constitute such a corporation. Its details and by-laws we should wish to have left to the Church itself.

In addition to legal powers for collecting the property of the Incumbents, it is sought that this Board should be entrusted with the further power (under the sanction of the Bishops collectively)—1st, to amend parochial divisions—and, 2d, to alter the distribution of incomes amongst the Clergy, as the circumstances of each district may seem to render expedient.

Now, the power of altering parochial divisions belongs at present to the Privy Council. This is not, therefore, the creation of a new power, but a

mere transfer of it, from a body which does *not*, to one which *does* necessarily consist of *Church members*.

Again, you must be quite aware that the proposal of re-distribution of income did not originate with the present Memorial. It was distinctly suggested in the petition to the House of Lords, which was presented last session by a majority of the Irish Prelates. To those Prelates I shall refer, therefore, the defence of their own proposal.

And the whole measure, (with the exception of that part of it which relates to commutation) was brought forward last session by the Hon. Bingham Baring, in the form of amendments to the then tithe bill. This gentleman (the son of a noble Lord who was a member of Sir R. Peel's Cabinet) did submit his clauses to the consideration of the most zealous parliamentary advocates for the Church Establishment. And although they abstained from pressing them, it was confessedly on the ground merely that the time was not advantageous. Of the principles of the measure they strongly approved. Many months have since elapsed, and during all this time, though some of your number were fully aware that Mr Baring's clauses had not been abandoned, no objections have been till now (publicly at least) raised against them.

The extreme parties, however, (as you may perceive from the newspapers,) have now joined in vituperation of the measure. The most prominent objections advanced against it are—first, that it does *not* contain the appropriation clause; and, secondly, that it *does* contain it.

It is plain, then, that the measure has not been hastily advanced; and it is quite evident also that those who framed the memorial could not have adopted any step better fitted to secure the calmest deliberation than that which they did adopt, in printing it and circulating it amongst the Clergy, with some of their reasons in its favour.

Under the dreadful circumstances of this unhappy country, and with your knowledge of the fact, that in many places, our most esteemed Clergy are unable to leave their homes, except under the protection of police, it might have been justly expected from you, that when you censured one proposed method of calming disturbance, you would at the same time have suggested another which seemed to you more safe, and also practicable. I still hope, that as you have now engaged in the subject at all, you will apply your minds to it, in such a way as is calculated not to *prevent*, but to *produce* settlement. And, in devising your system, you will of course reflect not only upon the past and present, but also upon all the impending causes of future danger. Amongst other things, you will consider what influence the probably speedy institution of some species of Poor Law is likely to have, in increasing or diminishing the willingness of landlords to continue those payments to the Church, which now pass through their hands. It is very true that, under the laws of the land, the tithes or the composition, are as decidedly the property of the Church, as the remaining portion of the rent is the property of the

landlord. But, you will remember, that laws may be changed, and that landlords form the majority of both Houses of Parliament. That it would be against the permanent interests of landlords, even as far as this world is concerned, to permit the withdrawal of Church endowments, I strongly maintain, and you will agree with me in the opinion. But, it is their conviction, and not ours, that will decide the matter. Without thinking worse of them, than I do of other human beings, I must hold it advisable that the Church property should be disengaged as far and as speedily as possible, from shortsighted *individual* cupidity.

I am, Rev. Brethren, your's very truly,

CHARLES DICKINSON.

P.S.—I must not omit returning thanks on the part of those who have signed the petitions to our Rev. Brother, who, in addition to signing your protest, has left for us at Messrs. MILLIKEN'S, a manual of instruction, chiefly composed in the form of question and answer. The questions are certainly not common-place, and the answers are very satisfactory. He has shown to demonstration, that the measure cannot be successful unless it receive the approval in due form of King, Lords, and Commons. We are convinced by his reasoning, so entirely, that even if we had determined upon enacting the measure by our own authority, we should now unanimously withdraw from the attempt, and adopt the more sober plan upon which we *have* been acting, of sending up humble and respectful petitions.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CHRISTIAN EXAMINER.

DEAR SIR—I beg you to allow me to make use of your valuable Magazine, for the purpose of offering some observations upon a petition to the King, on the important subject of the Established Church, now lying for signature at Milliken's in Grafton-street. My reason for offering any remarks upon it is, because it contains some views of which I highly approve; but as it likewise adopts some principles which appear to me highly objectionable, I cannot help strongly protesting against it as a whole. I feel very sorry that there should have been introduced into this petition, those principles to which all considerate friends of the Church must object, because I, as well as the authors of this petition, would wish not continually to be found *petitioning against* measures proposed, but much prefer joining with my Clerical Brethren in petitioning the King and Parliament, for the adoption of some plan which might appear to all likely to be productive of good. I am disappointed at the variety of topics introduced into the Petition, upon which it was reasonable to suppose that there would be much difference of opinion, because when the subject was first broached in conversation, there was given much reason to hope that the proposed Petition would

contain only a few simple principles, on which there might be looked for a pretty general agreement. As some of your readers may not have seen the Memorial or Petition to the King, which has been printed and sent to different individuals, I shall beg you to insert a copy for their information.

[In the Original, the Memorial to his Majesty is here inserted.]

In the prayer of the first part of the Petition, I most fully agree. I have for many years been led by an attentive consideration of the position of the Clergy, with regard to the people amongst whom they live, to desire that all intercourse between them, as to pecuniary matters should cease. I have felt it most desirable for the unfettered, unimpeded exercise of the ministry, that the Clergy should have nothing to do with the individuals to whom they preach, as to the collection of their income, and some time since, at the suggestion of a friend, I sent my views upon the subject to a person holding an exalted situation among his Majesty's Ministers. I have seen no reason to alter my sentiments upon the subject: on the contrary, every day's experience only convinces me the more, that he would be a friend to the Established Church who should secure her ministers from the possibility of collision upon pecuniary matters. For this purpose I proposed not to give up or diminish, in any way, the property of the Church, but to give the Bishop and Clergy of each and every diocese, the power of vesting their property, for their use, in the hands of trustees, who should collect the whole income of the Church in the diocese, and after having deducted the expense of collection, and unavoidable losses, divide the net income amongst the several incumbents, according to the relative proportion of their incomes as they are paid nominally under the Composition Act. I felt assured that the income could be collected more cheaply and more securely by a corporation acting for the whole body than by the several individuals, and all feeling of individual hostility would be done away. I should much prefer seeing a separate trust for each diocese, than to see the whole property of the Church in Ireland put into the hands of one corporation.

I had likewise suggested that when each incumbent received his income, not from the very parish to which he was constituted, and in which he lived, but received his share of the produce of the whole diocese, there would be a facility afforded for dividing the surface of the country into parishes, with the sole regard to the convenience of ministerial superintendence. Nothing can be more senseless than the present distribution and division of parishes, and a great benefit would be conferred on the country, if, the subject of income being put out of the question, a new division could be made. As far, then, as these two points go, the prayer of the Memorial to the King, is in exact accordance with what I have been long desirous to see effected.

I could much wish, likewise, to see the property of the Church so collected, distributed according to the amount of duty, and the weight of responsibility attached to each minister of a parish. I differ from the author of the memorial in thinking the persons entrusted with the collection of the

income, necessarily the most qualified to settle its *distribution*. I would put the first into lay hands, and have the last in ecclesiastical hands. This, however, is but a minor difference, and I cannot have the slightest doubt, that some such arrangement as this would give stability, and an increased power of influence to the Established Church. As far then, as these points go, I could join in the Memorial to the King, somewhat modified.

But beyond this I could not go one step with the memorial. I consider, as well as the author of the memorial, lay patronage to be an evil, to be an usurpation on the Church; but I could not petition to have it removed, as it bears upon the parishes in Ireland, whilst it is still allowed to remain with all its evil influence upon the Bishopricks. As long as the Bishops are appointed by the Ministers of the Crown, I should be sorry to see lay patronage done away with, or, in other words, more patronage thrown into the hands of the Bishops, whilst they are themselves supported by persons so little likely to select them for their spiritual qualifications. The worst feature in our Church is, the appointment of our Bishops by the ministers of the Crown, who are guided by political considerations. Was a Bishoprick now, to be filled up, a person would not be sought on the ground of his power and zeal to uphold the Protestant faith, as it is in the Articles of the Established Church; but one who would be willing to withdraw his protest against Popery, and to patronise the present system of National Education, which is doing more to strengthen Popery in the land than any other instrument now at work. An overbearing Popish power must now be pleased in the appointment of Bishops as well as in that of the law officers of the Crown; and is this, I would ask, a time to seek to throw more influence into their hands, whilst they are themselves under a worse influence than at any former period of our history? No; until the evil of patronage is corrected at the fountain, in the appointment of Bishops, it would only make bad worse, to attempt to correct it in the inferior places, by putting it more universally into the hands of other persons, who, in future at least, may be very badly selected for their high office. Lay patronage, it will be admitted, is an evil; but it is often a compensation for the greater evil of a bad appointment of Bishops. An appeal might be made to facts on this subject; but it is one on which I would rather not be led to speak more in detail. When the Bishops shall be appointed in a more pure and unexceptionable manner, and when by the revival of a Convocation, or Clerical Synods, they shall be brought more to have common feeling with their Clergy, and to be more under the influence of any light and knowledge which the Clergy as a body possess; then will every friend of the Church wish to see them holding and exercising the full patronage of the Church.

But to the last clause in the memorial, I feel that every thinking friend of the Church must have the most decided objection:—"That government should purchase the whole tithes of Ireland, substituting for them a land-tax, whose proceeds might be applied to the several local expenses in Ireland,

which are now defrayed out of the revenues of the united empire, such as grants to public institutions, payment of police," &c.

In the preliminary observations affixed to the memorial, it is stated that this transaction might take place, leaving the Church revenues unimpaired, and, at the same time, giving to the nation a surplus of from 200,000*l.* to 300,000*l.* per annum. How this wonderful profit in the sale of one species of property by the purchase of another, is to be effected there is not a hint given. How the nation can gain 200,000*l.* or 300,000*l.* per annum by purchasing the tithe, except by giving that much too little for it, I cannot conceive. How the country can be the gainers, in pounds, shillings, and pence, without the Church being equally a loser, I cannot imagine. How the seller can get the value, and the buyer put into his pocket 200,000*l.* or 300,000*l.* per annum, no book upon profit and loss, with which I am acquainted, enables me to calculate. There is but one way to effect this, even in semblance; and that is, to cry down the value of the tithe, the property of the Church; to purchase it at the reduced value thus attributed to it; and then lay a tax upon the land equal to the real value of the tithe. Lord Althorp, in 1833, stated the value of the Church's property at 723,200*l.* Now, if it should be purchased at a calculation of its income being only 500,000*l.* per annum, and a land-tax should be laid on the land of 723,200*l.* per annum, then, indeed, would the nation gain 223,200*l.* per annum: but it would be robbed from the Church; it would be as grievous an act of spoliation as ever was devised by the most open enemies of the Church.

If there is any way found out by which the seller shall get the value of his commodity, and the purchaser make one-third by the purchase, it would have been well if the ingenious discovery had been made known to the parties concerned before they were asked to approve of the transaction. But, for my part, as I have not been able to discover this lucrative mode of buying and selling, which would be almost as profitable as the possession of the philosopher's stone, I must say,—I should as soon petition for the appropriation clause of the last session, which, if I mistake not, never contemplated such a surplus to the nation as 200,000*l.* or 300,000*l.* per annum.

I have thus stated what I do approve of, and what I disapprove of, in the memorial. I hope all the Clergy will be willing to give their assent to every thing that shall fairly promise increased usefulness; whilst, I hope, they will never be led, blindfold, to petition for dubious plans little explained; and which may turn out, even without the intention of their authors, detrimental to the real interests of the Church.

Wishing much success to your Magazine, as a channel of communication with the Clergy and pious laity, I am your sincere friend,

R. D.

Letter of the Rev. Robert Daly, A.M. Rector of Powerscourt.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE DUBLIN RECORD.

SIR—Allow me, through the medium of your paper, to offer a few remarks upon a letter of Dr. Dickinson's, which appeared in the *Dublin Evening Post*, dated January 26. It will be necessary to advert to a few introductory facts:—At a Clerical Meeting, held on the 6th of January, a Clergyman, highly respected by all his brethren, mentioned in conversation after dinner that Dr. Dickinson had spoken to him about the propriety of the Clergy not merely petitioning *against* measures proposed for the reform of the Church, of which they disapproved, but petitioning *for* some plan which they might think likely to benefit the Church. He mentioned then the plan of having the property of the Church vested in the hands of trustees for the use of the Church generally, with a power of re-dividing the country into parishes, according to local convenience, and re-distributing the income with reference to the work to be done, &c. To the principle of this plan, there seemed to be a general feeling of acquiescence; and many of the Clergy there present expressed their willingness to sign a petition which should embrace that principle, and *that only*. In a few days after, there came out from Dr. Dickinson a petition or memorial to the King, which not only petitioned for the adoption of that principle, but further went on to pray for a sale of the property of the Church to government; by which, according to a statement made in some prefatory remarks, prefixed to the petition, the church income would be unimpaired; and at the same time the nation would gain a surplus of from 200,000*l.* to 300,000*l.* and persons, not great financiers, were left entirely in the dark as to the means by which great gain to one party, and unimpaired income to the other, was to be brought about.

I would ask was this petition, with this important addition, the same which our respected friend was authorised by Dr. Dickinson to speak of at the Clerical Meeting? Was this a petition confined to the subject discussed and approved at the Clerical Meeting? And yet I am informed that many persons were urged to sign this petition on the ground that it was approved of by many of the Clergy at a Clerical Meeting—and that some whose names are attached to the petition allowed their names to be subscribed because they supposed it was a petition in accordance with the principles which they had assented to at the meeting.* Now, I would ask, is this right? If Dr. Dickinson's plan for commuting the property of the church is a good plan—if it is so excellent as to leave the church income unimpaired, and at the same time give the nation a surplus of from 200,000*l.* to 300,000*l.* per annum, it would surely gain friends to itself by having been fairly stated before-hand. Why did not he request our respected friend to state this part

* Might not Provosts xxiv. 31, be an appropriate subject for consideration to these gentlemen, at their next Clerical Meeting?

of his plan at the Clerical Meeting, as well as the other? Why did he not entrust him with the calculations which were to prove the practicability of this great financial expedient? This would have been fair and candid. But he has introduced it into the petition, and seems to expect that an approval of the first proposition will carry with it an approval of the second, without inquiry or explanation.

In his letter of the 26th of January, he has given an explanation; he has put forward this calculation, upon which he makes his assertion that the church will obtain its full income, and yet the nation get an immense surplus, which is this:—

Government is to purchase the tithe from the Church at sixteen years' purchase; that is, for 100*l.* per annum, government is to give the Church 1,600*l.* But Dr. Dickinson does not tell the Church or her trustees how they are to make this 1,600*l.* produce 100*l.* per annum, which is, I believe, what common people would understand by the full income. If the Commissioners put this 1,600*l.* into the funds, until they have an opportunity of laying it out "in lands or rent-charges in England or elsewhere," they will not receive for it 3*½* per cent., or 56*l.* in place of the 100*l.* which they have sold to Government. If they buy land in Ireland, set to solvent tenants at such moderate rents as shall secure regular payments, they will have to pay about twenty-five years' purchase, and so get 4 per cent. for their money, or 64*l.* in lieu of the 100*l.* they have sold. If the Commissioners shall buy lands or rents in England, as Dr. Dickinson suggests, they will have to pay many more years' purchase; as many as from thirty to forty years, with a proportionable loss of income to the Church; and yet this is what Dr. Dickinson calls securing to the Church her full income.

But, according to him, the nation is to gain an immense sum, but how is this? It is, as he states, "the difference between the amount of interest it would have to pay for the purchase money, and the amount of annual property sold to it by the Church."

In order to make up this great surplus, the land of Ireland which, in many places has not paid tithe for many years, is now to pay to Government, who have purchased it, the full amount, 100*l.* for every 100*l.* which Government has purchased. The amount of tithe was, I think, stated by Lord Althorp in 1833, to be about 730,000*l.* per annum. It would take nearly twelve millions to purchase that at sixteen years' purchase, and the interest to be paid for that twelve millions would amount to above 400,000*l.* per annum. If, every farthing of this was collected, there would be a surplus of 330,000*l.* out of which must be deducted the expense of the management, losses, &c. Now, should there be deducted out of this surplus 15 per cent., or 20 or 30 per cent., on the 730,000*l.* as has been held out to the occupiers and owners of the land in every proposition made for the settlement of the tithe question, it would almost entirely swallow up this much-boasted surplus; 30 per cent. allowed to landholders would amount to 216,000*l.* This deducted from

330,000*l.* would leave but a surplus of 116,000*l.* to pay all expenses of collection, management, &c. What would be the real surplus in this case?

But no doubt there can be a surplus to the nation by making the inhabitants pay, to the last farthing, the very thing, under another name, which they desire to be released from; that is, making them pay with one hand, that they may have a surplus in the other. But if there shall be a deduction in the payment at all answerable to the expectations which government have authorised the people to hold, the surplus must vanish into utter insignificance.

What, then, is the real character of Dr. Dickinson's mighty plan, which he expected the Clergy to petition for without explanation, upon a simple reliance on his character as a financier?

A plan by which the Church, instead of getting her full income, as he has stated in so many words, shall have her income reduced a fourth, a third, or nearly one-half, and the Exchequer gain, perhaps, the paltry sum of about 50,000*l.* or 60,000*l.*

As a Clergyman who desires the spiritual efficiency of the Established Church, I should willingly join with my superiors and brethren in seeking that which shall set us as a body more free to do our work as Ministers of the Gospel, by delivering us from all pecuniary dealings with our flocks, by making a better division of the country into parishes, and by distributing the income more in proportion to the work to be done, and the several demands upon the Minister: but I would myself abstain, and should wish to see my brethren abstain from lending themselves to doubtful speculations in finance. If our Government, fettered by the avowed enemies of Protestant truth, rob us of our income, let us submit, and take patiently the spoiling of our goods; but let us not facilitate the work, by admitting, in any degree, the principle of spoliation.

I remain your humble servant,

ROBERT DALY.

Powerscourt, January 30.

Copy of the Petition of the Irish Prelates to the House of Lords; presented, August, 1835.

TO THE LORDS SPIRITUAL AND TEMPORAL IN PARLIAMENT
ASSEMBLED—THE HUMBLE PETITION OF THE UNDERSIGNED
ARCHBISHOPS AND BISHOPS OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF
ENGLAND AND IRELAND ESTABLISHED IN IRELAND.

SHEWETH—That your Petitioners, actuated by no ungenerous or uncharitable feeling, desire for themselves, for the ministers of the Established Church, and for their Protestant brethren, no other privileges and protection than such as may be consistent with the public good, and its con-

nection with the institutions of the empire, and necessary to secure the interests of pure religion, which in this, and in every other state, is confessedly the only solid basis of national and individual prosperity.

That upon this foundation, your Petitioners rest their claim to the interposition of your Lordships' House, for the maintenance of the Established Church in Ireland; a church truly catholic and apostolical in her doctrines, worship, and polity; deeply seated in the affections of the most enlightened part of the community; diffusing her kindly influences through all the national establishments, and intimately interwoven with them; the steady and tried supporter of British connection and civil order; and the great bulwark against the inroads of Romish usurpation, in a land where disaffection to the British name, contempt of legal authority, and blind obedience to the Papal see, appear in their undiguised forms, and prevail to a formidable extent.

That such a Church, deserving, as it should seem, to be cherished and supported in proportion to the need of her holy and counteracting influence, your Petitioners fondly trusted, had been, with equal wisdom and piety, connected in indissoluble association with the State, by the fundamental laws of the empire, and recognised, and formally pronounced to be so connected by the solemn act of Union.

That your Petitioners behold with mingled emotions of surprise and dismay, the establishment of this Church about to be undermined, and in many districts of Ireland utterly dismembered and overthrown by the provisions of a bill recently introduced into parliament—her property alienated from its rightful owners, and appropriated to other uses than those of divine worship and sound religious instruction, under a duly constituted and legally established ministry, to which uses that property was originally dedicated, and has been since guaranteed by repeated acts of parliament.

That under these afflicting circumstances, your Petitioners are constrained by the sacred obligation imposed on them, to watch over the interests of their brethren, and of the flocks committed to their charge; but, above all, by their duty to Almighty God, who will demand of them an account of the stewardship, to lay before your Lordships the genuine feelings of their hearts, and to appeal to your pious solicitude for the well-being of a Church which is, on every consideration, civil and religious, entitled to your zealous protection.

That your Petitioners disclaim every purpose of embarrassing his Majesty's Government, by insisting on any rights, which, however just in themselves, may not be strictly connected with the preservation of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Ireland. If, notwithstanding the alterations which have been made by late enactments in the concerns of the Church, improvements are still required, your Petitioners are most willing to contribute to their introduction; and if the distribution of the Church revenues be so unequal as to impair her usefulness, they are desirous to see them

applied in such a way as best may increase her efficiency, seeking only to render her, under God's grace, a more powerful instrument of edification. Meanwhile, the ministers of the Church set themselves in opposition to no salutary arrangements, by which those revenues may be collected without danger of collision with the passions of an adverse party, and by which, tranquillity and kind feeling may be restored to a long distracted part of his Majesty's dominions.

That although your Petitioners consider it more especially their duty to vindicate the right of the national Church to the undisturbed possession of its property, they cannot, at the same time, refrain from adding, that such a proceeding as the meditated diversion of ecclesiastical revenue, would weaken the security of all other property, and create an universal distrust of the national faith, and of the validity of every act of settlement.

That your Petitioners would further most earnestly impress upon the minds of your lordships that the suppression, as proposed by the bill, of eight hundred and sixty parishes in Ireland, which now strictly form parts of consolidated benefices, but which it is proposed arbitrarily to dismember from adjoining parts, solely for the purpose, as it should seem, of making out a striking case of the numerical inferiority of Church Protestants in the parishes thus separately considered, is founded upon a principle of partial calculation, subversive of every Church Establishment, and is equally applicable to parts of parishes in England, in which dissent abounds; that the operation of this principle in Ireland would be to strip the Incumbents of large Protestant parishes of their entire parochial income, in all instances in which that income is now derived from the part of an united benefice, where the population may happen to be almost exclusively Roman Catholic, and could not, at the same time, fail to be productive of results most injurious in a religious point of view, as inevitably depriving many members of the Church of the spiritual blessings now enjoyed by them, as leading to an incalculable diminution of Protestants, and as holding out a dangerous incitement to persecution.

That your Petitioners further, most respectfully, submit to your Lordships, that what is alleged in vindication of this provision of the bill, namely, that it is unjust that the Roman Catholic should be called upon to pay for spiritual services, which he neither requires nor receives, is founded on palpable misrepresentation, inasmuch as the Roman Catholic pays for no such spiritual services, but in satisfying the demands for tithe composition, merely discharges an engagement on the faith of which he occupies his land. In truth, the Protestant Incumbent is paid by no one; but in return for the duties which he performs, (of which every parishioner who chooses may avail himself,) enjoys a portion of a corporate endowment, to which he alone can prefer a legal claim, and which is secured to him by a title more ancient than that of any other species of property. That the principle implied in this vindication would, moreover, convert the clergy into mere stipendiaries of the state, or render them dependant upon the voluntary contribution of

their parishioners, than which nothing can be conceived more adverse to one great end of the ministry, the inculcating of sound doctrine through "evil report and good report"—nothing more injurious to the real spiritual welfare of the people. That the unprecedented powers proposed by the bill to be vested in the Lord Lieutenant, of diminishing ecclesiastical income to the standard of 300*l.* a year, in parishes reported to exceed that sum in value, would, if acted upon, on the one hand, reduce the clergy to comparative poverty, and to a disparity with the members of other liberal professions, deprive them of a fair and reasonable motive to professional diligence, and exclude them from their due station in society: whilst, on the other hand, these powers would constitute the executive government the sole judge of ministerial qualification, and of parochial exigencies, and the dispenser of ecclesiastical rewards.

That your Petitioners would, in conclusion, most respectfully impress on your Lordships' mind, that the time chosen for thus infringing the rights, and impairing the efficiency of the Church, is one in which the prudent zeal, confirmed with knowledge, now so conspicuously displayed by her Ministers, holds out the fairest hope of the extension of her influence, if not deprived of suitable advantages for its exertions: that in the foregoing and other provisions of the bill, your petitioners discern but too plainly, a direct tendency to promote the objects of a party, which is to be satisfied with nothing less than the total, and not far distant subversion of the Protestant Church Establishment in Ireland, and the erection of Romish superstition on its ruins; and your petitioners, therefore, with united voice, would humbly implore your Lordships, in the most urgent terms that language can supply, or our great apprehensions dictate, not for ourselves only, but in the name of our religion, our country, our altars, our children, and our flocks—for the sake of all that has been hitherto held sacred, for the honour of God, and for the purity of his holy faith, to avert from us this appending consummation of evil.

That in thus making this solemn appeal to your Lordships, who have so often interposed for the preservation of the civil and religious rights of the Empire, your Petitioners have done what, in an honest conscience, and to their best judgment, they are persuaded to be their duty. It remains for them to commend your Lordships, by their prayers to the Throne of Grace, and to entreat Almighty God, that in this, and in every other trying conjuncture, he will be pleased to direct your Lordships' deliberations, as may best tend to his glory, and the well-being of his Church.

JOHN G. ARMAGH.

R. CASHEL.

POWER TUAM, &c.

NATH. MEATH.

CHARLES KILDARE.

GEO. KILMORE.

J. ELPHIN.

J. DROMORE.

J. CLOYNE.

RICHARD DOWN AND CONNOR.

S. CORK AND ROSS.

EDMOND LIMERICK, ARDFERT AND AGHADOE.

ROBERT CLOGHER.

ROBERT OSSORY.

CHRISTOPHER KILLALOE AND CLONFERT.

Letter of the Rev. C. R. Elrington, D.D. Chancellor of Ferns,
and Regius Professor of Divinity, in the University of
Dublin.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE D. E. POST.

SIR—As Dr. Dickinson has indirectly alluded to me, and derived from my silence an argument to support his statement of the opinions entertained by the late Bishop of Ferns, I beg permission to give a short answer through your paper. I did not contradict the statement made about the Bishop of Ferns in Dr. Dickinson's first letter, because I never saw it till the second had been published. Dr. Dickinson defends the plan proposed in the Memorial, on the ground that the late Bishop of Ferns had approved of a concentration of Church property. To this I answer, that every person who ever read one line of the Bishop of Ferns' pamphlets on tithes, which were written at intervals from 1787 to 1824—every person who ever heard him speak on the subject, must know that he was the most decided enemy to any change whatever in Church property. The Bishop opposed strenuously even the Tithe Composition Bill, and predicted, what was then laughed at, but has since been unhappily verified, that while the act shook the property of the Church, it would not remove the hostility to the payment.

Dr. Dickinson rests his authority for the statement upon a conversation with me, and had he related the whole of that conversation, which I well remember, he would not have derived much support for his Memorial. He was advocating the plan then lately proposed by the Archbishop of Dublin in his examination before the House of Lords, and expressing his anxious wish that my father would support it. I told him that my father disapproved most strongly of the plan, and much preferred that proposed by Mr. Blake, of purchasing out the tenants of the see-lands, and giving the income arising from them in lieu of tithes—so much so, that had he not been influenced by respect for the opinion of the other Bishops who differed from him, he would have given his assent to that scheme, not as good in itself, but as the best of those proposed; and considering its advantage to be not concentration, but separation, that “the estate of the Church (to use his favourite quotation) would be incorporated and identified with the mass of private property, of which the State is not the proprietor, either for use or dominion, but the guardian only and the regulator,” and be held by a tenure antecedent to that of any estate in Ireland; and, finally, that the property would not be a tax capable of being alienated at the caprice of a Minister, and at every period of collection exciting in the minds of the people the notion of an oppressive burthen.

I cannot but feel the attempt to bring forward the name of the late Bishop of Ferns in support of the Memorial, as an insult upon his memory.

The Bishop sacrificed his life in an attempt to oppose the bill introduced during the last session by Lord Morpeth; and shall his name and authority be now made use of to deceive the clergy into the approbation of a plan based upon the worst parts of that bill—the appropriation and suspension clauses—and giving powers over the Church to an irresponsible Board, which even the present Ministry did not venture to propose?

I am, Sir, your obedient Servant,

C. R. ELRINGTON.

Copy of the Petition of the Clergy of the Archdiocese of Tuam,
&c. to the House of Lords, January, 1836.

We, the clergy of the arch-diocese of Tuam, and dioceses of Ardagh, Killala, Achonry, and Clonfert, with all due submission and deference, desire to disabuse your Lordships' House of the impression that tithe composition cannot be collected in Ireland.

Many untoward circumstances have heretofore concurred to prevent us from asserting our rights and defending our property, one only of which it may be prudent to mention at this present—namely, our poverty.

Reduced as we have been by combinations of violent men, we were unable to maintain extensive suits in the superior courts. But now, benevolent, honorable, and powerful persons, alarmed at the progress of disorder, and pitying our condition, having associated for the generous purpose of resisting robbery, supporting the oppressed, and vindicating the law, have already proved that our incomes are recoverable with as little danger of collision with a duped and insubordinate people as might occur in the recovery of any ordinary debt.

Much has been done already—much is in progress, and we have good reason to expect that by patience and perseverance, and the due execution of the law, as it now stands, under the 2d and 3d William IV. c. 119, especially under its 15th section, we may at no distant period secure the undisturbed possession of our rights, and be at peace.

While we confess ourselves ignorant upon what principle of justice reduction in our income can be contemplated—while we would refuse to sanction such an extraordinary procedure by any act of ours—while no remonstrance or expostulation shall ever go from us tending to impede the progress of Parliament upon things purely temporal—yet, in conformity with the conviction above stated of the efficacy of the law as it now stands, we would pray your Lordships not to change or alter it, without being fully satisfied that the substituted measure will be more consonant to strict justice, and more likely to promote the peace and prosperity of the country.

General Protest of the Clergy.

PROTEST OF THE UNDERSIGNED CLERGY OF THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH, AGAINST A PROPOSED ADDRESS TO THE KING AND BOTH HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT, NOW LYING FOR SIGNATURES AT MESSRS. MILLIKEN'S, GRAFTON-STREET.

It having been announced that a Memorial to the King, to be followed by Petitions, similar in substance, to both Houses of Parliament, is now lying for the signatures of the Clergy of the Established Church; the first and most prominent object of which, amongst other objectionable arrangements, is stated to be "the formation of an Ecclesiastical Board for collecting the revenues of Incumbents," with the extraordinary power of "altering and correcting parish divisions, and of assigning to each Clergyman hereafter, (preserving vested interests,) such income, out of the general fund, as may in their judgment, be proportioned to the amount of duty, and the weight of responsibility allotted to each:"—

We, the undersigned Clergy, most earnestly and most respectfully wish to impress upon our brethren, the impolicy and danger of hastily pledging themselves to a measure, thus vitally affecting not only their interests, and those of their successors, but the constitution and safety of the Established Church:—a measure which has been suddenly and partially put forth, without allowing time for inquiry and deliberation, though in order to the approval of such a change, the most ample inquiry and the most careful deliberation are necessary; and, without communication with the general body of the Clergy, though on a subject so nearly affecting our ecclesiastical establishment, every Clergyman should be permitted to form and express an opinion:—a measure which rests for its principal support, as far as we can learn, upon the result of a private solicitation of individuals, rather than on the unbiassed, independent, and disinterested judgment and suffrages of the clerical body:—a measure, opposition to which is attempted to be suppressed, and the adoption of it strenuously enforced by the intimidation, rashly made, if without authority, and, if with authority, made in despite of all deliberation and discussion, namely, that within the brief period of about six weeks, the whole question will have been definitively settled by an Act of Parliament:—a measure, which comes, recommended to the clergy, neither by its intrinsic character, for the principle we believe to be vicious; nor, by the good effects which it promises, for we believe it to be pregnant with manifold mischief; nor by the sanction of their Prelates, for *their* opinion, though of such intimate importance to the body, of which they are the legitimate guardians, has not been sought, from them all intelligence of the subject, so far as we know and believe, has been withholden; and we have recently been told, somewhat presumptuously, as we feel, and withal somewhat disingenuously, that it is now too late to procure their deli-

berate sentiments; nor by the counsel of their sincerest and most judicious advocates in both Houses of Parliament, whom we suppose to be kept as much in the dark upon the proposed scheme, as are the Prelates of the Church:—a measure, finally, which, after the defeasance of the title of the actual clergy, would place the entire amount of Church property, and the distribution of it according to the supposed labours and responsibility of Incumbents, together with a total alteration of parochial division throughout Ireland, and, it may be, the suppression of numerous parishes, at the discretion of a body of men, not recognized by the present laws of the Church for such purposes, and the constitution of which is at present not revealed, and its powers undefined.

Against a measure of this innovating nature—so brought forward, so supported, and so enforced; so destitute of circumstances to recommend it, and so portentous and alarming in itself; so fraught with consequences subversive of the stability, and entailing such an abandonment of the rights of ecclesiastical property; so inconsistent with the principles of our Church polity, and placing so alarming and unheard-of powers in the hands of any set of commissioners, however chosen:—we, for our parts, conceive it to be our bounden duty most solemnly to protest. The reasoning contained in the prefatory observations to the Memorial, we consider as most fallacious; the advantages therein described, as illusory; but the consequent evils of the plan, certain and destructive.

In declaring this our firm conviction, although supported, as we well know, by the judgment of those who deserve to be most respected for wisdom and attachment to the Church, as well as for their station in it, we presume not to dictate to our brethren our own estimate of the proposed measure; but we would entreat them to pause before they give their assent to a scheme so novel and momentous, the entire character and details of which remain to be developed; above all, we are anxious to guard against the inference which might be drawn from our silence, that the plan has met, or is calculated to meet with the unanimous approval of the Established Clergy.

We respectfully invite those of the Clergy who concur with us in our views of the proposed measure, to testify, by their early signature to this paper; their disapproval of the objects of the Memorial.

January 28, 1836.

Letter from the Rev. Dr. Dickinson to the Editor of the Dublin Evening Post, which appeared Feb. 13th, 1836.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE D. E. POST.

SIR—A letter, signed by a respected individual, appeared in your journal of last Tuesday evening, reflecting upon a reference made by me to an opinion of the late Bishop of Ferns, on Church property.

Whatever differences of a personal nature may exist between the writer and myself, I shall endeavour to settle, as I best may, by a private correspondence. This course seems to me most suitable for two very old friends; besides, I shall not be accessory to withdrawing public attention from an important matter, by allowing personal topics to intermingle.

The petition to the King, Lords, and Commons, signed by fifty-three clergymen, recommended a commutation of the tithes, or composition for rents, or rent-charges. This, in a letter published in your paper, I called concentration of the Church property, because at present this property is diffused over the whole country, while, under the proposed change, it would be brought within a less space.

I stated also in this letter, that I *understood* the advantages of concentration were fully appreciated by the late Bishop of Ferns, of whom I spoke with the praise which I feel to be justly his due; and in a subsequent letter I made a similar reference. This is the only point of the memorial with regard to which I made any allusion to this respected Prelate.

And the justness of this reference is now fully supported by unquestionable authority.

It had been suggested in another quarter to commute tithes for the *see* lands—(subsequent acts of parliament having thrown some difficulties in the way of this arrangement, the petitions proposed that tithes should be commuted for rents or rent-charges wherever they could be procured. This certainly did not exclude *see*-lands so far as purchaseable.) With regard to this proposal, it is now stated on authority, that the Bishop of Ferns, “had he not been influenced by respect for the opinion of the other Bishops who differed from him, would have given his assent to this scheme, not as good in itself, but as the best of those proposed.” The Bishop, it would appear, would call this separation, instead of concentration. Either name is applicable in different respects, but I care not which name is adopted.

The petitioners, like the Bishop of Ferns, give their assent to a similar scheme, because they think it the best likely to be proposed. And the advantages of this scheme are so ably stated in the letter in question, that I shall take the liberty of transcribing the passage. The estate of the Church, (to use his, the Bishop's, *favourite* quotation,) would be incorporated and identified with the mass of private property, of which the State is not the proprietor, either for use or dominion, but the guardian only and the

regulator ; and finally, that the property would not be a tax capable of being alienated at the caprice of a minister, and at every period of the collection exciting in the minds of the people the notion of an oppressive burthen."

This praise is as fully applicable to the commutation as such, which is proposed in the petitions as it is to that which was in the view of the Bishop. But the commutation for see-lands would, as is noticed in the letter quoted, have the additional advantage, that this property would "be held by a tenure antecedent to that of any estate in Ireland." I wish, therefore, that the plan assented to by the Bishop had been proposed when it could have been carried, and that it should be still realized, as far as circumstances will permit.

The enemies of the Church Establishment will, of course, oppose commutation on the very ground of those advantages thus clearly stated. It might be expected, however, of its friends, at least of such of them as discern those advantages, that they would endeavour to promote, not to oppose such a measure.

Let them still, however, reflect and endeavour to secure those advantages, if not in the way proposed in the petitions—in some other way which may strike them as more desirable, and at the same time likely to be acceded to.

I cannot agree with the respected writer of the letter in question, in calling the present payments to incumbents a tax. I admit, however, that most persons represent it as such ; and that on this, as well as on other accounts, it is, as he has stated, peculiarly exposed to "being alienated at the caprice of a Minister."

And in addition to this evil, I shall now briefly enumerate some others attending the present nature of Church property ; entreating the friends of the Church to devise *some* remedy for them.

The evils in the present nature of Church property, are—

1st. Payments being made to each clergyman by his parishioners, of whatever communion they may be, tend to produce collisions which prevent his usefulness, or to use the words before quoted, "at every period of collection, they excite in the minds of the people the notion of an oppressive burthen."

2nd. These payments being made *directly* to the person who is appointed to perform spiritual service, are supposed to be paid on account of such services rendered ; (whereas, they are in truth a portion of rent, paid by those who held land, and on that account.) This makes it *appear* a hardship that parishioners of one persuasion should make over any payment to a clergyman of a different communion.

3d.—The present number of payers are very great, which, besides making each payment so minute as to be in many cases almost uncollectable, has this additional disadvantage, namely, that when a combination is formed against such payment, in the very multitude of opponents, they have safety.

Again, as I have before noticed, evils arise from the church not having control over its own property.

The Church is now compelled to use its limited income, with reference to the fields, not to the human beings who, because they are its own members, might be most benefitted by its exertions. And hence, when the number of its members in any parish are few or none, the income of that parish is called, and will always be called, a surplus. Some portion of that money, it will be confessed by all, would be *more usefully* employed in securing spiritual advantages for those members of the Church, in other places, whose wants are now inadequately provided for; and if thus used, it would fully appear that the Church, instead of having a redundancy, has, in fact, a deficiency of income.

The petitions would seek to remove the former evils by commutation, and the latter, by seeking for the Church a power to distribute its funds according to its judgment.

There are many clergymen (as well as lay members of the Church) who discern those evils and long for their removal, while they have abstained from signing the petitions through disapprobation—some of one feature of the proposed measure, and some of another—each approving of what the other objects to.

Let these clergymen, therefore, propose and agree upon some practicable measure which may seem to them more likely to secure the advantages they wish for, and to remove the evils which they deprecate. This is their duty; and I most heartily desire that they may not only engage in its fulfilment, but be successful.

The present petitioners will, I am persuaded, weigh any suggestions, from whatever quarter they may come, and should they regard these as preferable to the measure they have recommended, will gladly embrace such a measure in preference to their own.

C. DICKINSON.

